MEDITATIONS AND DISQVISITIONS, UPON SEVEN CONSOLATORIE PSALMES OF *DAVID*:

NAMELY,

The 23. *The* 27. *The* 30. *The* 34. *The* 84. *The* 103. *The* 116.

By Sir RICHARD BAKER *Knight.*

LONDON,
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A

CATALOGVE OF THE SEVERALL Treatises written by this Authour.

NAMELY,

MEditations and Disquisitions upon the Lords Prayer.

Meditations and Disquisitions vpon the 1 Psalme.

Meditations and Disquisitions vpon the seven Penitentiall Psalmes.

Meditations and Disquisitions vpon seven Consolatorie Psalmes.

Also a Poem of his entituled Cato Variegatus, or Cato's morall Distichs varied.

TO THE RIGHT HONOVRABLE,

WILLIAM Lord CRAVEN,
Baron of *Hamstead*, &c.

MOST HONOURED LORD,



Shall perhaps move Envie to say, Quæ te tam læta tulerunt sæcula? *but for my selfe, I am bound to say it, who have received from your Lordship, indeed*

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a great Favour, the remission of a great Debt; for which notwithstanding I account myselfe to stand obliged still, though in a lesse profitable, yet in a more binding Obligation, to bee your perpetuall servant. I am called upon by Gratefulnesse, to erect some Monument in honour of your Bountie; and a more lasting Monument, I could not thinke of, within the compasse of my poore abilities, then to Dedicate these Psalmes of David, *to the memorie of your Name: for though your owne Heroick vertue have made you a Monument of the same mettall that Fames Trumpet is made, which is likely, and worthy to last long; yet this per-*

perhaps, may prove Monumentum Fama perennius; *a Monument that will continue your memorie, when Fame it selfe shall be buried in oblivion. But how long soever it shall continue, yet not so long as my Devotion to be, as my Desire to be accounted to be.*

Your Lordships humble,
and obliged servant,

Richard Baker.

Imprimatur,
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Sacell. Domest.

Septemb. 11.
1639.

THE TVVENTIE THIRD PSALME OF *DAVID.*

THe Lord is my Shepheard; I ſhall not want.	*Verſe* 1.
Hee maketh me to lye downe in greene paſtures; he leadeth me beſide the ſtill waters.	*Verſe* 2.
Hee reſtoreth my ſoule; hee leadeth mee in the paths of righteouſneſſe, for his Names ſake.	*Verſe* 3.
Yea, though I walke through the Valley of the ſhadow of death; I will feare no evill: for Thou art with mee; Thy rod and thy ſtaffe, they comfort mee.	*Verſe* 4.
Thou prepareſt a Table before me, in the preſence	*Verſe* 5.

of mine enemies; Thou anoyntest my head with Oyle; my cup runneth over.

Verse 6. Surely, goodnesse, and mercy, shall follow me, all the dayes of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

MEDI-

MEDITATIONS VPON THE XXIII. PSALME OF *DAVID.*

IS it not a grievous fall, that where I might have ſaid; The Lord is my Creatour, and hath made me after his own Image: I am now glad to ſay; *The Lord is my ſhepheard*; as though I were but a ſheepe? and yet perhaps no Fall in this at all: For, what was I, when I was at beſt, but the Lords ſheepe? Depending wholly upon him for all I had: No cloathes to cover my nakedneſſe, but of his making: no food to ſatisfie my hunger, but of his providing: and oh that I had continued his ſheepe ſtill, for then though weake, I ſhould have beene innocent, though feeble, I ſhould have been harmeleſſe; Where by taking (O miſerable miſtaking) the Serpent for a ſhepheard, I became *Verſe* 1.

of an innocent Sheepe, a ravening Wolfe, and should have so continued, at least a perpetuall strayer: if my true shepheard (O the wonderfull bowells of compassion) had not left the Ninetie nine in the Wilderuesse to seeke after mee, and had not found mee out, and brought me back againe into his Fold; that if there be joy in Heaven, that the lost sheepe is found, there ought to bee much more joy in Earth, that the lost sheepe can say; *The Lord is my shepheard; I shall not want?*

But how can I truly say; *The Lord is my shepheard*; seeing hee hath turned me over, sheepe and lambes and all, to Saint *Peter* to be our shepheard? Can he turne me over to another, and yet himselfe reteine a propertie in me still? But is it not that there is a Hierarchie of shepheards? Saint *Peter* and his successours, but Ministeriall shepheards; God himselfe the shepheard Paramount; *Hee ledd his people like sheepe by the hand of Moses and Aaron:* Hee but used the service of *Moses* and *Aaron*; himselfe was the shepheard still; it was hee that led them. And is it not said of Kings too, that they are ποιμενες λαῶν, Shepheards of the people? and perhaps *David* speakes here, as hee was a King: for though a King be a shepheard in relation to his Subjects; yet he is but a sheep in relation to God: for relation in all created things, makes *quidlibet ex quolibet*; a sheepe of a shepheard, and a shepheard of a sheepe, till

Psal. 77. 20.

we

we come at God, and there Relation ceaſeth; for God being *ſummum bonum, unum & idem*, can take no diſparagement by any relation, we are all ſheepe to him; *David* and Kings; Saint *Peter* and all; All faine to ſay; *The Lord is my ſhepheard*; or elſe, can neuer truly ſay; *I ſhall not want.*

It is a great happineſſe for ſheepe to have a good ſhepheard, but a greater happineſſe to have him both good and able; many ſhepheards are the one, and not the other; few are both; indeed none are both; None able to ſecure from want, but onely the ſhepheard, who is *Elohim Saddai*; God All-ſufficient. Kings no doubt are able ſhepheards, but yet not able to ſecure from want; for we ſee them often-times to be in want themſelves: Saint *Peter* an able ſhepheard, yet not ſo able, as to ſecure from want; for who knowes not what want he was in himſelfe, when time was? Wee ſhall never be ſheepe ſecure from want, till wee come to ſay; *The Lord is my ſhepheard*; and then wee may juſtly inferre: We ſhall not want.

Indeed God is a ſhepheard, as able as hee is good, and as good as he is able. *For hee leadeth mee into greene paſtures.* Not onely hee hath greene paſtures to lead me into, which ſhewes his Abilitie; but hee leads mee into them, which ſhewes his Goodneſſe. Hee leades me not into paſtures that are withered and drye, that would diſtaſte me before I taſte them: but

he leades me into Greene paſtures, as well to pleaſe my eye with the verdure, as my ſtomacke with the herbage; and inviting me as it were to eate, by ſetting out the meat in the beſt colour. A meat though never ſo good, yet if it looke not handſomely, it dulls the appetite: but when beſides the goodneſſe, it hath alſo a good looke; This gives the appetite another edge, and makes a joy before enjoying. But yet the goodneſſe is not altogether in the greenneſſe. Alas, Greene is but a colour, and colours are but deceitfull things, they might be greene leaves; or they might bee greene flags, or ruſhes: and what good were to mee in ſuch a greenneſſe? No my ſoule, the goodneſſe is in being greene Paſtures, for now they performe as much as they promiſe; and as in being greene, they were a comfort to mee as ſoone as I ſaw them; ſo in being greene paſtures, they are a refreſhing to me now, as ſoone as I taſt them. As they are pleaſant to looke on, ſo they are wholſome to feed on: As they are ſweet to be taſted, ſo they are eaſie to bee digeſted; that I am now me thinkes in a kind of Paradiſe, and ſeeme not to want any thing, unleſſe perhaps a little water, with which now and then to waſh my mouth, at moſt to take ſometimes a ſippe: for though ſheepe bee no great drinkers; and though their paſtures being greene, and full of ſappe, make drinke the leſſe needfull, yet ſome drinke they muſt have beſides;

beſides; and now ſee the great goodneſſe of this Shepheard, and what juſt cauſe there is to depend upon his Providence: for hee lets not his ſheepe want this neither; *but hee leades them beſides ſtill waters*; Not waters that roare and make a noyſe, enough to fright a fearefull ſheepe: but waters ſtill and quiet, that though they drinke but little, yet they may drinke that little without feare. And may I not juſtly ſay now; *The Lord is my ſhepheard, I ſhall not want?*

And yet perhaps there will be want for all this; for is it enough, that he leade them into greene paſtures, and beſides ſtill waters? May he not leade them in, and preſently take them out againe, before their bellyes be halfe full; and ſo in ſtead of making them happy, make them more miſerable? ſet them in a longing with the ſight, and then fruſtrate them of their expectation? No my ſoule; The meaſure of this Shepheards goodneſſe, is more then ſo; Hee not onely leadeth them into greene paſtures, but hee makes them to lye downe in them; Hee leades them not in, to poſt over their meat, as if they were to eate a Paſſeover, and to take it in *Tranſitu*, as dogges drinke *Nylus*; but, *hee makes them to lye downe in greene paſtures*, that they may eat their fill, and feed at leiſure; and when they have done, lye downe and take their eaſe, that their After-reckoning may be as pleaſing as their Repaſt; and

and that they may be free from being *ſolliciti de craſtino*, for taking care to provide for to morrow, ſeeing they have a Market of proviſion round about them, or rather their meat ready dreſt to their hands for many dayes to come. O my ſoule, thus are the godly provided for, by the Lord their Shepheard; and though their paſtures may ſeeme withered, and dry in the eyes of the world; yet to them, they are greene, and pleaſing, and give more gladneſſe to their hearts; then theirs whoſe Corne and Wine, moſt abundantly increaſeth. And now, O my ſoule, is it not time now to ſay Grace, and to acknowledge a thankfulneſſe for this plenty of my meat, and drinke? and can I ſay a ſhortet Grace then this; *The Lord is my ſhepheard; I ſhall not want?*

And yet perhaps there will be want for all this; for if God be a Shepheard, will hee not ſheare his ſheepe? and if hee ſheare me; will he not leave me bare and naked? and how then can I ſay; I ſhall not want? God indeed is a Shepheard, that will ſheare his ſheepe; but hee will *Tondere*, not *Deglubere*; Hee will take off our old cloathes, but it is to make way for new; and he takes them off, in a time, when we may well ſpare them; indeed in a time, when it is better for us to be without them: and therefore, neither is his ſhearing any cauſe, but I may ſay ſtill; *The Lord is my ſhepheard, I ſhall not want.*

And

And yet I say still, there will perhaps bee want for all this: For is it enough to have food, and rayment? Is it enough to have ease and plenty? Alas! all these doe but serve for the body; there is no provision here for the soule: and if the soule be not provided for; all the rest, is but the care of *Martha*, troubled about many things, and none of them needfull. But he that told *Martha* of her errour, is it like he will commit the like errour himselfe? No my soule, his principall care is of the soule; for *hee restoreth my soule*: but as he made mee not a living soule at first, till hee had made the earth, and the fruits of the earth to serve for my living; so he Restores not my soule now, till he hath first ledde me into Greene pastures, to serve for my sustenance: for to what purpose were it to give a life, and not a living? to give a Being; and not give meanes to maintaine that Being? and was it not perhaps from hence, that Christ tooke his patterne; when he taught us, to Pray for daily bread, before wee Pray for forgivenesse of sinnes? But though he provide first for the body, which was made first; yet he provides most for the soule, which was given last: Hee but feedes my body, but he restores my soule: Hee ministers to my body but accidentall and outward things; but inward and substantiall to my soule. And why is it, that God provides more for the soule, then for the body; but because the soule is of *Verse* 3.

farre more worth then the body? for God is not as man, to take care of things out of fancie, or upon mistaking: but hee takes care of things according as hee values them, and values them according as they are worth; *Numquid cura Deo de Bobis*, Doth God take care of Oxen? Indeed the Soule, in comparison of the Body; is of farre more value, then the worth of an Oxe, in comparison of a man. O that wee could be so wise, as to know the true value, and worth of the soule! and to take care of things according to their values! we should then certainly be more carefull of the soule, lesse carefull of the body then we are: and be more sensible of that saying of Christ; *What availes it a man, to gaine the whole world, and to lose his soule?* It may bee allowed perhaps to men, to provide first for the body, so they would provide most for the soule, as God doth here: but to provide first and most, for the body; and last, and least for the soule, as most men doe; that I say not, all for the body, and nothing for the soule, as some men doe; This must needs be extremely against all good order: seeing it is so directly against Gods order.

But to what is it that God restores my soule? It must be to something that my soule had before, and hath not now: and so it is: Hee restores it, to its originall puritie, that was now growne soule, and black with sinne: for alas, what

what good were it, to have greene paſtures, and a black ſoule! Hee reſtores it, to its naturall temper in affections, that was growne diſtempered with violence of Paſſions: for alas what good were it, to have ſtill waters, and turbulent ſpirits! Hee reſtores it indeed to life, that was growne before, in a manner quite dead, and who could reſtore my ſoule to life, but he onely that is the good Shepheard, and gave his life for his ſheepe, which no ſhepheard ever did but Hee? Saint *Peter* layd downe his life, but he gave not his life; for he would perhaps have kept it, if he might: and he layd it not downe neither, as a ſhepheard for his ſheepe, but as a ſheepe rather for his ſhepheard: but this Shepheard gave his life for his ſheepe: Gave it, *quia oportuit* indeed, becauſe it was neceſſary he ſhould give it; but yet, *quia voluit* too, becauſe hee would giue it; for if it had not beene voluntarie, it could not have beene acceptable; and if not acceptable, never certainly have ſerved for a Ranſome; and if not Ranſomming, no Reſtoring.

But is it not ſaid, The Shepheard was ſmitten, and the ſheepe were ſcattered? and what was his ſmyting, but the Giving his life? and had he not done better to have kept his life, then leaving it, to leave his ſheepe to ſcattering? O my ſoule, though they were ſcattered for a time, yet it was but to be gathered together againe with the greater joy: for though

he left his life, yet he left not his ſheepe: but had a care of them, even in death; for hee had power to lay downe his life, and power to take it up againe: and as he layd it downe for his ſheepes Ranſome, ſo hee tooke it up for their juſtification.

Every ſhepheard knowes that ſheepe are ſubject to many infirmities, and knowes many infirmities to which they are ſubject; and therefore is never without his Boxe of Tarre, as the beſt remedie in caſes of danger; but if the danger paſſe his Tarre-boxe, and touch upon the life; he then gives them over, and lets nature worke: but the Lord is a Shepheard of another nature, above the power of Nature; He reſtoreth the ſoule, when the life is in danger; hee hath wayes of curing, which no ſhepheard knows of but himſelfe; and if other helps fayle, he need but to ſay, *Velo, ſis ſanus*; *I will, Be thou whole*: and without any Tarre-boxe, it is a preſent remedie. And may I not now juſtly ſay; *The Lord is my ſhepheard*; *I ſhall not want?*

And yet perhaps there will be want for all this: for is it enough, that he reſtore my ſoule, and then leave me? What is it to reſtore my ſoule, but to put it *in ſtatu quo prius*, in the ſtate it was made at firſt; which, was after the Image of God in holineſſe, and righteouſneſſe? and if I could not continue in this ſtate, when made in it, how ſhall I continue in it, when reſtored

ſtored to it? Hee will therefore ſupply this want too: for having reſtored my ſoule in righteouſneſſe; *Hee will leade mee in the paths of righteouſneſſe:* that though left to my ſelfe, I tooke a wrong guide, and went aſtray; yet when he leades me, that is the way it ſelfe; I may be ſure, I cannot poſſibly goe out of the way.

But alas, O Lord, theſe paths of righteouſneſſe, have a long time ſo little beene frequented, that all prints of a path, are almoſt cleane worne out; that it is a hard matter now but to find where the paths lye, and if wee can find them, yet they are ſo narrow, and ſo full of rubbes; that without ſpeciall aſſiſtance, it is an impoſſible thing, not to Fall, or goe aſtray. Even ſome Angels, and thoſe no meane ones, were not able to goe right in theſe pathes of righteouſneſſe; but for want of leading, went awry, and periſhed. O therefore, Thou the great Shepheard of my ſoule, as thou art pleaſed of thy grace to leade me into them; ſo vouchſafe with thy Grace to leade me in them: for though in themſelves they bee pathes of righteouſneſſe; yet to me, they will bee but paths of errour, if thou vouchſafe not, as well to leade me in them, as into them. O the comfortable pathes of righteouſneſſe; the very paths in which *Enoch* walked with God, and which walked in as they ſhould be, will bring us to a better Paradiſe, then that of our

first Parents. For if God leade us in these paths; these paths will leade us to the place, where the Goats shall be put on the left hand, and the sheepe be taken on the right, that now I am certainly come to the highest cause of my glorying to say; *The Lord is my shepheard, I shall not want:* for at his right hand is the fulnesse of Joy forevermore.

But why is it, that this great Shepheard will doe these great things for me? Is it because he findes me to be a sounder sheepe, and to have fewer blemishes upon me then some other? Alas no; for I am nothing but blemishes, and unsoundnesse all over; but, *Hee will doe it for his Names sake*; For seeing hee hath taken upon him thé Name of a good shepheard, he will discharge his part, what ever his sheepe be: It is not their being bad sheepe, that can make him leave being a good shepheard, but he will be good, and maintaine the credit of his Name, in spight of all their badnesse: and though no benefit come to them of it, yet there shall glory accrew to him by it, and his Name shall nevertheless be magnified, and extolled.

But now, O my soule, though I can say, I shall not want: yet can I say, I shall not feare? For is not Feare an inseparable companion of Mortalitie? and can I then choose but feare, that know my selfe to be mortall, and know also what the condition is of being mortall?

Not

Not onely that I may dye, but that I muſt dye: and not onely muſt one day, but may this day; Alas, this very minute! I feare indeed when I conſider my owne frailtie: but when I conſider that the Lord is my Shepheard, I then am armed againſt all feare, againſt this feare of death it ſelfe: Hee that makes me to walke in Greene paſtures, and in paths of righteouſneſſe, and keepes me from want: hee alſo leades me by the hand, as I walke, and keepes me from feare: *Yea, thou I walke in the valley, of the ſhadow of death, I will feare no evill:* Though I be brought to never ſo great extremitie: though brought as low as the Valley of death, though brought as neere to Death, as the ſhadow to the body; though brought to walke as a ghoſt amongſt the dead, yet I will feare no evill. The ſhadow of death may perhaps be farre enough from it, for all our life, is but the ſhadow of death: but the Valley of the ſhadow muſt needs be cloſe to death, as being the very entrance to it; yet if I were brought to this doore of death, if brought within the doore, and compaſſed about with Death; yet for all this, for all that can be ſaid, or done, I will feare no evill. Will you not? will you not feare evill, when the evill is ſo eminent, and the danger ſo great? Is the face of Death no more terrible, but that you dare looke upon it, without feare? Though it be the reproach of the wicked, to feare where there

Verſe 4.

there is no cauſe of feare, yet not to feare where there is cauſe, can be no commendation in the godly. And why then will *David* ſpeake thus, more like a deſperate man, then one that were well adviſed? No doubt, *David* will give good reaſon for that hee ſpeakes; As it were deſperatneſſe, not to feare, where there is Imminent danger: So it were cowardiſe to feare, where there is eminent comfort: Lay then the comfort to the danger, and you will eaſily excuſe *David*, for fearing no evill. You have ſeene the Danger, now heare the Comfort: *The Lord my ſhepheard is with mee*; For he is never abſent from his flock: *his rodde, and his ſtaffe, they comfort mee*: and may they not juſtly comfort me, when with them he is able to recover a ſheepe, though falling downe the ſteepeſt Precipyce, or though already in the Wolfes mouth, or in the pawes of the Lyon. Indeed, if I had not my Shepheard with mee; Or if my Shepheard had not his inſtruments with him, I might juſtly then be in feare of evill; but what evill can I feare now, when I have my Shepheard, and my Shepheard his Inſtruments; *his rod, and his ſtaffe*; Both Inſtruments of comfort; and not onely of comfort, but of incouragement; both Inſtruments of preſerving.

But is it well underſtood, what his Rod, and his Staffe meane? For, they may as well bee inſtruments of correcting, as defending: and if

of

of defending, there is then juſt cauſe they ſhould be comforts: but if of correcting, what comforts can they be? for what comfort can it be, to be corrected? O my ſoule, great comfort to me, that know the nature of this Shepheard, as I doe: for doe not I know, that whom he loves, he corrects; and therefore whom he corrects, it is a certaine Argument that hee loves? Indeed, if the Rodde and the Staffe, were in the hands of an enemie; I ſhould then feare them, as inſtruments for my evill; but being in his hands that is my Shepheard; now they are but as my owne weapons put into an abler hand, that can better manage them for my good, then I could doe my ſelfe. Could *Moſes* with his rod fetch water out of a Rock, and ſhall not God with his rod, bring comfort out of trouble? Could *Jacob* with his ſtaffe paſſe over Jordan, and returne enriched with heards of cattell, and ſhall not Gods ſtaffe make me paſſe over the Jordan of this world, and bring mee home with troopes of joy? Shall not his rod, though it wound me, comfort me; when I know he wounds, but to the end hee may apply a Plaiſter? Shall not his ſtaffe, though it beat me, comfort me; when it is but to beat the duſt out of mee, that am nothing but duſt? But moſt of all, muſt not his rod needs comfort me, when it is his rod, that makes me lye downe in greene paſtures? Muſt not his ſtaffe needs comfort me, when it is his

staffe, that keepes me right in the paths of righteousnesse? Oh sweet Rod, how can I choose but kisse thee! Deare staffe, but embrace thee! seeing it is long of you, that his greene pastures, and his paths of righteousnesse doe me any good; for they would certainly doe mee hurt; his greene pastures would pamper up my flesh too much; his pathes of righteousnesse would puffe up my spirits too much; If his Rod, and his Staffe were not used as Moderatours. And if you thinke this strange, that the paths of righteousnesse should puffe up the spirits: Remember Saint *Paul*, to whom there was given a thorne in the flesh, lest his walking in the paths of righteousnesse, should puffe him up. But if the rod, and the staffe, in these senses, may not be sufficient comfort to take away all cause of feare; at least, *there shall come forth a Rod, out of the stemme of Jesse:* (indeed to *David* in particular, a speciall comfort) that will certainly be sufficient against all feare, though I walke in the Valley of the shadow of death; for this Rod, as a Mountaine shall fill up all Valleys; and as the substance, shall fulfill all shadowes; and as the true life, shall swallow up Death in victory. And is there not a staffe that will doe as much? the staffe upon which *Jacob* leaned, when he was a dying? when he was indeed in the Valley of the shadow of Death? O my soule, having this Staffe of *Jacob* to leane upon; this Rodde of the stemme of

of *Jesse* to be my comfort; I shall make my selfe unworthy of protection, if I should feare any evill, though I walke in the valley of the shadow of death. For why should I feare Death, which is but the parting of the soule from the body, seeing I cannot come to God with them both at once, but they must first bee parted one from another? My soule cannot come to the light of life, if my body bee not first in the shadow of death: indeed but in the shadow, for the substance of death can never take hold upon it, if my soule be gone before to take possession of the Light. O then vouchsafe, O God, to bring my soule first, and after it, my body out of the shadow of Death, into the light of Life; and then I shall have cause, just cause to say, and to glory in saying; *The Lord is my shepheard, I shall not want.*

But if it be doubted still, how it can be, that Gods rodde, and his staffe, should be comforts to the godly, then marke the issue, and see what follows upon his Rod, and his Staffe; *Thou prepareſt a Table before mee, in the preſence of my enemies: Thou anoynteſt my head with Oyle; my cuppe runneth over.* For this is a sure rule with God, that his chastening alwayes ends in cherishing; if he strike with his Rod, and perhaps breakes the head with his Staffe; he gives Oyle presently to anoynt it, and to make it whole againe. If he make mee to keepe Fasting-day to day, he allowes mee a feast for it *Verse 5.*

to morrow, and then my cuppe ſhall runne over.

Hitherto God hath vouchſafed to bee a Shepheard, and *David* hath beene his ſheepe; Now God will be a Conquerour, and *David* ſhall be a King. Now God as a Conquerour will beſtow favours on his friends, and diſgraces upon his enemies, and therefore now the Scene alters: where it was before in the field, it is now within doores; and where *David* before ſpake in the third Perſon, he ſpeakes now in the ſecond; *Thou prepareſt a Table before mee*; and this is to feaſt his friends: *In the preſence of mine enemies*; and this is to confound his enemies. To prepare a Table before him, is it ſelfe a favour: but the greatneſſe of the favour is in this, that a Table is prepared before him, in the preſence of his Enemies. For as there is no ſuch joy of proſperitie to the godly, as when their enemies ſee the proſperitie they are in; it being a kind of revenge, that God takes upon their enemies, in their behalfe: ſo there is no ſuch Tragedie to the wicked, as to be made ſpectatours of the proſperitie of the godly; it being the greateſt affront, that can be to their expectation, to ſee them advanced, whom they both hated, and deſpiſed. Could *Haman* have had a greater affliction, then to ſee *Mordecai* advanced, and himſelfe forced to bee an inſtrument in his advancing? *Videbunt quem transfixerunt, They ſhall ſee him, whom they pierced*;

ced, shall be one of the miseries, and perhaps one of the greatest in Hell it selfe.

And now is *David* a King, and as a King, hath Honour and Plentie; *Thou anoyntest my head with oyle*, This is his Honour; *My cuppe runneth over*, This is his Plentie: that where he said before; *The Lord is my shepheard; I shall not want*: hee may as justly say now; The Lord is my rewarder; I shall abound.

But is it not that in the Person of *David* here, there is a Reference to Christ himselfe; seeing it is all verefied in him, that is spoken here? Hee that hungred so long, till Sathan thought he could have eaten stones, hath now a Table prepared before him; a Table where the godly shall sit, and eat with him in his Kingdome. Hee that had enemies insulting over him; hath now all his enemies made his foot-stoole; Sinne and Death, Sathan and his members, lye prostrate under him: Hee that had his Head pricked with thornes, hath now his Head anoynted with Oyle: with the oyle of gladnesse above his fellowes. Hee that thirsted, and could get but Vinegar to drinke, hath now such plenty, that his cup runneth over: All power is given him, both in Heaven and Earth. At least in the person of *David*, there will be relation to all the godly: Now *Lazarus* that could not get so much as crummes from *Dives* his Table, shall have a Table himselfe prepared before him: Now *Dives* that

fared deliciously every day, shall bee glad to stand waiting at *Lazarus* Table, for a drop of water: that the godly may well be content to be in penurie a-while, seeing they shall have a Table ere long prepared before them: They may well be content to let their Enemies bee masters awhile, seeing they shall have them ere long to be wayters upon them: They may well be content to hang downe their heads for awhile, seeing their heads ere long shall bee anoynted with Oyle: They may well be content to have hard measure for a time, seeing the time will be shortly, that their Cup shall runne over. And now, O my soule, will not all this serve to comfort thee, in this vale of miserie? Art thou so besotted on things present, as to have no consideration, to make no valuation of things to come, and to come so shortly? so shortly all, that they are put in the Present tense, as if they were come already?

But if *David* cannot over-rule thee as a King, let him at least perswade thee as a Prophet; for now you shall have him a Prophet, and a Votarie, and this is his Prophecie; *Surely, Mercy, and goodnesse, shall follow mee, all the dayes of my life*: and this is his Vow; *I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.*

But is *Davids* Prophecie like to bee true? will Mercie, and Goodnesse, follow him all the dayes of his life? O my soule, it was true in *David*, it shall be true in all the godly: for whom

whom God loveth, he loveth to the end; and Mercie, and Goodneſſe, ſhall follow them all the dayes of their life: Mercy, to commiſerate; and Goodneſſe to relieve: Mercie to beare with infirmities, and Goodneſſe to ſupply wants: Mercie to be an aſſiſtant in Adverſitie, and Goodneſſe to be a Governeſſe in Proſperitie. Alas! O Lord, if thy Mercie ſhould not follow me, thy Juſtice would: if thy Goodneſſe ſhould not follow mee, thy Vengeance would; and then one that were no Prophet, might eaſily foretell the miſerable eſtate I ſhould be in: as now that Mercie and Goodneſſe follow me; one that is no Prophet may eaſily tell the happy condition I ſhall be in. Although this perhaps be not ſo much a Prophecie, as a Faith in *David*, at leaſt a Prophecie which all the godly may make to themſelves by Faith, to be aſſured of the mercy and goodneſſe of God; and not to follow them for a time, and then give over, but to follow them all the dayes of their life. But what? no longer then all the dayes of their life, and then leave them? No my ſoule, but all the dayes of that life, that ſhall never leave them. O the comfortable doctrine of Faith! farre more comfortable then Heathen Philoſophie ever knew; for that went no further, then *Ante obitum nemo*; as though no man could be happy till his death; where by this it appeares that men may bee happy while they live: for if a man

man be then happy, when the mercy and goodneſſe of God follow him, as certainly a greater happineſſe there cannot be: then ſeeing they ſurely follow the godly, all the dayes of their life; ſurely a godly man is happy while hee lives. But then the ſureneſſe is long of the mercy, and not of the man: for it ſeemes he would goe farre enough from it, if Mercy did not follow him: but now that hee is followed by Mercy and Goodneſſe, hee cannot goe ſo faſt from them, but they will overtake him, and make him happy. O mercifull God, ſo frame my heart, that I may not flye from thy Mercy, and put it to follow mee; at leaſt let it ſo follow me, that it may overtake me: for then I ſhall have the happineſſe to bee able to keepe my vow, that *I will dwell in thy houſe for ever*: but rather I ſhall have the favour, as an effect of thy Mercy, that *I ſhall dwell in thy houſe for ever*. For if this be a Vow, it is a ſtrange one, where all the benefit is to him that makes the Vow, and none at all to whom it is made, for what is it to God, whither I dwell in his houſe or no? ſuch Vowers God may have enow. O my ſoule, to vow to dwell in Gods houſe, is to vow to be his ſervant; and to bee his ſervant, is to ſerve him in holineſſe, and righteouſneſſe, all the dayes of our life; and though this ſervice be no benefit to God, as indeed no more is any thing I can doe, for my goodneſſe extendeth not to him: yet the Vow to bee his

ſervant

ſervant being well performed, will bee more acceptable to him, then if I ſhould vow as *Jepthe* did, to ſacrifice his onely Daughter.

But wee need not ſtand to juſtifie *Davids* Vow: for it ſeemes not ſo much a Vow of *David* to God; as a favour of God to *David*, that when his mercy hath followed him all the dayes of his life, he will take him afterwards to live with himſelfe; and though his body for a time be caſt out of doores, yet his ſoule ſhall preſently be received into his houſe, there to dwell with him and his Angels; not as a ſervant, but as ſonne; ſeeing none but ſonnes abide in the houſe for ever. Which in the perſon of *David*, is no leſſe the Portion, and may be as well the comfort of all the godly, and is but the expreſſing of that in a higher ſtraine; which was ſaid at firſt in a lower ſtyle; *The Lord is my ſhepheard: I ſhall not want.*

E THE

THE TVVENTIE SEVENTH PSALME OF *DAVID.*

1 *THE Lord is my light, and my ſalvation, whom ſhall I feare? the Lord is the ſtrength of my life; of whom ſhall I be afraid?*

2 *When the wicked; even mine enemies, and my foes, came upon me, to eate up my fleſh; they ſtumbled, and fell.*

3 *Though an hoſt ſhould encampe againſt me; my heart ſhall not feare; though warre ſhould riſe againſt me, in this will I be confident.*

4 *One thing have I deſired of the Lord; that will I ſeeke after, that I may dwell in the houſe*

of the Lord, all the dayes of my life; to behold the beautie of the Lord; and to inquire in his holy Temple.

5 For in the time of trouble, hee ſhall hide mee in his Pavillion; in the ſecret of his Tabernacle ſhall hee hide me; he ſhall ſet me upon a Rock.

6 And now ſhall my head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me; therefore will I offer in his Tabernacle ſacrifices of joy: I wil ſing; yea, I will ſing praiſes unto the Lord.

7 Heare, O Lord, when I cry with my voyce: have mercy alſo upon me, and anſwer me.

8 When thou ſaydſt; ſeeke yee my face; my heart ſaid unto thee; thy face Lord, wil I ſeeke.

9 Hyde not thy face farre from mee; put not thy ſervant away in anger: Thou haſt beene my helpe; leave me not, neither forſake mee, O God of my ſalvation.

10 When my father, and my mother forſake mee; then the Lord wil take mee up.

11 Teach me thy way, O Lord, and leade mee in a plaine path, becauſe of mine enemies.

12 Deliuer mee not over to the wil of mine enemies; for falſe witneſſes are riſen up againſt mee; and ſuch as breathe out crueltie.

13 *I had fainted, unleſſe I had beleeved to ſee the goodneſſe of the Lord, in the land of the living.*

14 *Waite on the Lord; bee of good courage, and hee ſhall ſtrengthen thine heart; waite I ſay, on the Lord.*

UN

MEDITATIONS VPON THE XXVII. PSALME OF *DAVID.*

LIght which makes all things visible, was the first made, of all visible things: and whether God did it, for our example or no, I know not: but ever since, in immitation of this manner of Gods proceeding, the first thing we doe, when wee intend to doe any thing, is to get us Light. Indeed Light, is not onely a directour, but a comforter: and nothing naturally strikes so much terrour, as Darknesse: for when wee are in the darke, not onely wee are apt to take into our fancies, all frightfull objects, but we know not how to take our steps, for feare of walls, and thresholds. It is every ones case, to have the Sunne for his light; but it is not every ones happinesse, to have God for his Light; and alas,

Verse 1.

alas, if I ſhould truſt to the Sunne for light, I ſhould be left in darkneſſe, every day, at leaſt at night: but God is a Sunne that never ſets: hee is Light himſelfe, hee is Light it ſelfe: and therefore it is good truſting to God for Light: for ſo I ſhall be ſure, neither day nor night, to be left in darkneſſe. O thou great Creatour of Light, Thou Light of all creatures, vouchſafe to ſhine upon me, and to lighten my darkneſſe, that neither any Objects of terrour may make mee to tremble; nor any Threſholds of errour may make mee to ſtumble, but that I may walke ſecurely in the confidence of this, *The Lord is my Light*: for of what then, of whom now, ſhould I be afraid?

But, is it enough that God bee my Light? what if I my ſelfe be blind? what good then will his Light doe mee? It is true; and therefore *David* ſtayes not here; but, *Deus illuminatio mea*; *God is my Enlightening too.* Hee is both my Light, and my ſight: my Light, by which to ſee; and my ſight, with which to ſee my Light, to make walls, and threſholds viſible; and my ſight, to make me able to avoide them. If it were not for Light, I ſhould be alwayes in the darke; if it were not for ſight, I ſhould bee darke my ſelfe: No illumination without both: and never both, but onely from God. There is one indeed, who hath gotten him a Name, to be called *Lucifer*; as though it were hee, that brought us Light: when God knowes

knowes but for him, we ſhould have had no darkneſſe: yet he pretends to both; both to Light, and to enlightning: but alas, his light is but impoſture; his enlightning, but illuſion: for as he can transforme himſelfe into an Angell of light; ſo he can transforme the light it ſelfe, and make it ſeeme light, when it is indeed darke: and therefore his light can never make Walls and Threſholds to be truly viſible: and as little can his enlightening, make us able to avoide them. For this was tryed in our firſt Parents, who upon his Enlightening, had their eyes opened indeed, but opened to ſee Good and Evill; not to diſtinguiſh good from evill, and therefore could not enable them, cannot us, to avoid the evill. But as they, that follow his light, doe ſtumble and fall at the Threſhold of errour; ſo they that are led by his enlightening, doe run their heads againſt the Walls of impietie; No avoiding of Walls and Threſholds; No ſhunning the ſnares of Sathan, the illuſions of this *Lucifer*, but onely by ſaying, if truly ſaying; *Deus illuminatio mea*, God is my enlightening; and then we may ſafely inferre, of what; of whom ſhould I be afraid?

Indeed *David* might well ſay; *Deus illuminatio mea; God is my Enlightening*: Seeing God had enlightened him, not onely to ſee, but to be a Seer, which is a Prophet: but what is this to us, who are farre from any ſuch enlightening, to ſee as Prophets? O my ſoule, it is e-

nough for us; that Christ is the great Seer, in whose Light, wee shall see light: and though *David* were of the Jewes, and wee bee of the Gentiles; yet as Christ was the glory of his people Israel: so he is a Light, to lighten the Gentiles: and therefore *Deus illuminatio mea, God is my enlightening*; as fit for us to say, as it was for *David*.

But doth Gods enlightening serve onely for a safeguard against Walls and Thresholds? Alas! the light of the Sunne, and the enlightening of Nature would serve to doe this: and what need we then to seeke any other? O my soule, there are spirituall Walls, and Thresholds, which no Sunne can make us see, which Nature her selfe is not able to see; onely Gods enlightening, hath the influence to doe it. There is a Wall of sinne, the Partition Wall betweene God and us: the Wall that barres us from having accesse to God: and this Wall, the naturall man sees not, neither can see: Illumination onely makes it visible. There is a Threshold of pride in the heart of man; a swelling of selfe-love, that lyes in the way wee are to passe, and is a cause of stumbling if not avoyded: and this Threshold the naturall man sees not, neither can see; onely Gods illumination makes able to see it. And many other Walls and Thresholds there are, which without Illumination can never be seene; and not seene, can never be avoided; and not avoided, are

are cause of falling into endlesse perdition. And as Illumination makes us to see these lights of Terrour, so it makes us to see also sights of Comfort; It makes us see Death lye dead before us, and swallowed up in Victory; It makes us see the powers of Hell astonished, as not able to endure the lustre of this Light: It makes us see the doores of Heaven open, into which by vertue of this Light wee have meanes to enter: It makes us see him that is invisible, God himselfe that is our enlightening, in whose Presence, is the fulnesse of Joy for evermore; and of whom then, of what now should I be afraid?

These indeed bee comfortable sights, but what comfort for me to see them, if I bee not sure I shall enjoy them? and how can I be any more sure to enjoy them, then the Angells that fell? For they had Illumination, in a greater measure then I can hope to have it; and yet for all their Illumination, they stumbled at the Threshold of Pride: and ranne their heads against the Wall of sinne, and utterly lost; Alas have lost for ever, all benefit, of all these comfortable sights. All this is true, and therefore *David* stayes not here neither; but *Deus illuminatio mea, & salus mea; God is my enlightening, and my salvation too,* and this hee was not to the Angels that fell: hee left them at Illumination, never conducted them to salvation; for if hee had done this, their Illumination had

never beene turned into darkneſſe; either they had not ſtumbled at all, or at leaſt not ſo ſtumbled, as to fall. If God were onely my illumination, I ſhould by that light goe to *Video meliora proboq́*, but ſhould preſently follow it with *Deteriora ſequor*: but when he is my ſalvation too; this makes me breake off at *Deteriora ſequor*: and where God was heard to ſay; *Perditio tua ex te O Iſrael*, Thy deſtruction is from thy ſelfe, O Iſrael: Now to heare him ſay, *Ego autem ſalus tua*, but I am thy ſalvation. If my illumination reflected upon my ſelfe, to make me ſeeme bright in my owne eyes, as though I had ſomething which I had not received, then indeed I ſhould bee in the caſe of the Angels that fell; for ſo did they: but now that my illumination reflects upon God: and makes me ſee all goodneſſe to be originally in him, none in my ſelfe, but what he is pleaſed to impart, or impute unto me; Now Illumination becomes a ſtep to ſalvation, and as they are free indeed whom the Spirit frees; ſo they are ſafe indeed, whom God ſaves; and of what then, of whom now, ſhould I be afraid?

But though God be my ſalvation: yet this perhaps may be onely in the life to come, and if it be no more but ſo, I may doe ill enough in this preſent life, for all his ſalvation in the next; and have I not cauſe then to bee afraid? To free thee therefore of this ſcruple; *David* ſtayes not here neither; but, *God is my ſalvation, and*

and the strength of my life too; Not onely of my life to come, which will be strong of it selfe, but of my present life, which hath no strength but in him. Or rather seeing godlinesse hath the promise of both lifes, both of this life, and the life to come, the first shall be first served; and then if God be the strength of my present life, there shall be in it no present weakenesse: and if no weakenesse, there need bee no feare; and of what then; of whom now, should I be afraid?

But though Gods strength be sufficient to defend me, if I had no enemies: Or if I were to fight but a single combat, yet can it be sufficient to preserve me, when an Army of enemies assaults me at once? and can I choose but feare, when I know my selfe unable to resist? O my soule, take heed thou be not in the number of those, to whom it was said; *What feare yee, O yee of little faith?* For what can an Army doe, against the arme of God? What can all Might do, against him that is Almightie? Have my enemies any strength, but what they have from God? And can they have any strength from him, against me, when hee employes his strength against them for me? No my soule; *though an host encampe against mee*; *though warre bee made upon mee*; yet as long as God is the strength of my life, it is neither their multitude, nor their malice that can hurt mee; but rather their very malice is the meanes, their multitude

cannot hurt me, for Malice hinders Illumination, and makes them, they cannot see their way; that when they came upon mee, and thought they had me sure enough; even then I was sure enough from their having: For hee that is the strength of my life, had layd a block in their way, which for want of Illumination, they saw not, at which they stumbled, and fell.

But yet, it is a grievous thing to have Caniballs for ones enemies, and such my enemies seeme to be: They seeke not more to destroy mee, then devoure mee: They came upon mee to eat up my flesh, as if I had beene their shambles; It is not enough they could kill mee, but they could find in their hearts to eat me: They are not satisfied with procuring my death, if they bee not themselves actours in it: It is not enough for them to have my bloud, unlesse their owne hands be imbrued in it: Indeed there is no such daintie dish to a malicious stomack, as the flesh of an enemy; it goes downe without chewing, and they swallow it up whole like Cormorants. But though Malice have a ravenous stomack, yet she hath but slow disgestion; though her teeth be sharpe, yet her feet are lame, at least apt to stumble, and this made well for *David*, for when his enemies came upon him, to eate up his flesh, because they came upon the feet of malice, they stumbled and fell. A man may stumble, and yet not

not fall, but to ſtumble, and fall withall, is the proper ſtumbling of the wicked, and eſpecially of the maliciouſly wicked: and ſuch, it ſeemes was the ſtumbling of *Davids* enemies, becauſe his enemies were ſuch; and ſuch I doubt not ſhall bee the ſtumbling of my enemies, becauſe mine are ſuch: and of what then, of whom now, ſhould I be afraid?

But to the end I may have ſome exerciſe for my illumination, that it ſtand not idle; and may have ſome teſtimonie for my ſalvation, that it grow not doubtfull; *There is one thing I have deſired of the Lord, and that I will ſeeke after; that I may dwell in the houſe of the Lord, all the dayes of my life, to behold the beautie of the Lord: and to enquire in his holy Temple.* Verſe 4. This beholding of Gods beauty, will be a continuall exerciſe for my Illumination; and this enquiring in Gods holy Temple, will give me aſſurance of my ſalvation.

It were very hard, if *David* making but one requeſt to God, that God ſhould deny him? for hath he not bidden us to aske, and wee ſhould have? and could *David* aske leſſe, then to aske but one thing? No my ſoule: God denied it not to *David*, nor will deny it to thee, nor to any other that ſhall aske it in Faith: and ſpecially if hee aske it to ſo good an end as *David* doth here, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his holy Temple.

But ſeeing *David* would make but one requeſt

queſt to God, why would he not make a greater? for alas, what a poore requeſt is this, to deſire to dwell in Gods houſe? and what to doe? but onely to ſee? and to ſee what? but onely a Beautie, a fading thing, at moſt but to enquire; and what is enquiring? but onely to heare newes; a vaine fancie; and what cauſe in any of theſe why *David* ſhould make it his requeſt to God? But marke, O my ſoule, what goes with it; Take altogether; *to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his holy Temple:* And now tell mee, if there be, tell me if there can be any greater requeſt to be made? any greater cauſe to be earneſt about it? For though worldly beauty be a fading thing, yet the Beauty of the Lord ſhall continue, when the world it ſelfe ſhall fade away; and though enquiring after newes be a vaine fancie, yet to enquire in Gods Temple, is the way to learne, there is no new thing under the Sunne; and there it was that *Solomon* learned, that all is vanitie. Indeed this one thing that *David* deſires, is in effect, that *Unum neceſſarium* that Chriſt ſpeakes of in the Goſpell; which *Mary* made choyce of there, as *David* doth here; and I may ſay, it is that pretious Jewell, which the rich Merchant ſold all he had to buy, and had his bargaine commended by Chriſt himſelfe. O how happy were wee, if we could bound our deſires within the compaſſe of things neceſſerie: for all our miſerie growes from

from this, that our desires have no certaine dwelling, but wander and range about from one object to another, like vagabonds from place to place; and no helpe there will be for it, till our desire arrive at that which is the best: for as long as there is any better to be had, the Desire will never leave desiring; and where is that best to be had, but in him onely, that is onely good: in him indeed that is the onely good: and seeing there can be no happinesse till the Desire be settled; and the Desire will never be settled, till wee come at God; therefore no meanes so likely to make us happy, as to dwell in Gods house; for there wee are sure we shall be with him; and once with him, never have desire to any thing besides him.

There are other houses, which in worldly considerations, and to worldly mindes, may seeme as convenient, and perhaps be more profitable to dwell in, then this house of God: but that which makes me so desirous to dwell here, rather then any where else, is partly for the prospect, that I may behold the beauty of the Lord; and partly for instruction, that I may enquire in his holy Temple. For there is not such a Prospect againe in the world as this; Not on the Mount, where Christ was shewed all the Kingdomes of the earth, and the glory of them: Nor such another place for instruction as here; Not all the Schooles of

Philosophers, Nor all the Oracles of the Heathen, in any degree to be compared with it.

And what then is this beauty of God, which *David* is so desirous to behold? what this house of God, in which he desires to dwell? There is a beauty of God in his creatures, most glorious indeed, and most worthy of beholding: but yet this needs no dwelling in Gods house to see it; wee may see it as well, dwelling any where else; but there is a beauty of God in himselfe, a beauty which if once we see, wee shall never be willing to take our eyes off; a beauty which the more wee see, the more we shall see cause to desire to see it; a Beauty, which without speciall illumination, neither the eyes of men are able to behold; nor the tongues of Angels to expresse; and this Beauty is no where to be seene, but in Gods house; and not there neither, but by dwelling in it: It is not for every one that comes in as a stranger, to see this Beauty, they must be dwellers in it; continuall, and constant frequenters of it, or they are never like to be admitted to behold it. There is indeed, in all the creatures of God, in some more eminently, a certaine tincture of this Beauty, and is perhaps that which deceives us in the estimating of our happinesse; because wee take tinctures for substance, and fixe our selves upon that which is made but onely for a passage. For tinctures though they please for a time, yet they soone weare out and decay: no

no ſolidneſſe, nor durableneſſe, but in the ſubſtance it ſelfe, and no ſubſtance of beauty, but onely in God: and therefore the trueſt happineſſe, indeed all true happineſſe, in onely the beholding of this Beauty. And if any man doubt of this, becauſe ſeeing, is but the ſatisfaction of one ſenſe; and happineſſe gives ſatisfaction at leaſt to all the ſenſes: Let him then heare, what *David* in another place ſayes; *Videte & guſtate, quam ſuavis eſt Dominus: See, and taſte, how ſweet the Lord is:* For in this Seeing, not onely the Taſting, but all the ſenſes are united, at leaſt the pleaſures of all the ſenſes are compriſed: and the rather, if wee conſider that Beholding hath a preheminence above Seeing: for where ſeeing may bee in *Tranſitu* onely; Beholding implyes a permanencie, and a fixing our eyes upon it; and ſuch is the Seeing, that is the Eſſentiall ſenſe of happineſſe.

And what then is this houſe of God, in which *David* deſires to dwell? hath God any other houſe then Heaven? and would *David* dwell in Heaven, whilſt hee is dwelling upon Earth? will nothing ſerve his turne, but to aske God for impoſſibilities? Indeed Heaven is Gods Throne, but Heaven and Earth both, are full of the Majeſtie of his glory: and therefore God hath a Houſe on earth too; a Houſe dedicate to the honour of his Name; and *David* juſtly makes his Prayer for this Houſe, becauſe indeed it is the houſe of Prayer, and no Rent

payd for dwelling in it, but onely Prayer: O then make me able, O God, to pay thee this Rent, and I shall never doubt of continuing thy tenant in this House, to behold thy Beautie, and to inquire in thy holy Temple.

But why should *David* make it a suite to God, to dwell in his House, seeing God leaves the doores open, that every one may come and dwell in it that will? O my soule, it is not simply to dwell in it, but so to dwell in it, that he may see Gods beauty; and this cannot bee seene without illumination; and no illumination, but of Gods donation. For indeed this dwelling, is a spirituall living, a donative onely in Gods gift: and justly therefore *David* makes it his suite, to have his Induction, but an Induction onely while wee live here; no perfect possession till another life: but hee that seekes not his induction here, must never looke for possession hereafter.

As to behold the beauty of God, is one great benefit of dwelling in Gods house; so it is another no lesse to inquire in his holy Temple: as that beholding, gives a satisfaction to our eyes; so this inquirie to our mindes. When *David* saw the prosperitie of the wicked; hee was so amazed, that hee knew not what to make of it, till he entred into Gods holy Temple, and inquired: and there he presently learned, what Gods meaning is in it, and why hee suffers it to be so. What knowledge so necessary,

sary, as the knowledge of sinne: yet Saint *Paul* confesseth hee had not knowne what sinne is, but for the Law: and where is the Law to bee learned, but enquiring in Gods holy Temple: and indeed if there bee any scruple of conscience, if any doubtfulnesse of mind, if any difficulty of question concerning either God or our selves; either the life present, or the life to come, by enquiring in Gods holy Temple, it is presently cleered, and resolved: for there are the Oracles kept, which serve to instruct, to teach, to reprove, that the man of God may be perfect in every good worke.

And amongst all the great mysteries which are learned by enquiring in Gods holy Temple; this is one of speciall comfort to me, that *when I am in trouble*, if his house that I dwell in, be not sufficient to defend me; *he will hide me in his owne Pavillion: in the secret of his Tabernacle will hee hide mee; hee will set mee upon a rock*: that one way or other, he will bee sure; and I may be sure, he will set mee in safetie, *Verse 5.*

But how can God hide me in his Pavillion, which lyes open to all men; and where every man may enter, and find me? He will then rather then faile, hide me in the secret of his Tabernacle; which is shut against all men, and where none enters but himselfe. But yet his Tabernacle may be burnt with fire; may bee blowne up with powder; blowne downe with winde: and what safetie then, in the secret

of his Tabernacle? Hee will then, if that faile, ſet me upon a Rocke, and a Rocke is ſubject to none of theſe, that ſo at leaſt, neither fire, nor ſword, nor tempeſt of wind, may prevaile againſt me. Or is it, that being once admitted to dwell in Gods houſe; I ſhall have, not onely the protection of a ſervant; for his *Tegere*, is *Protegere*; but the advancement alſo of a Favorite to be ſet upon a Rocke: for this, as it is a ſafetie, is no leſſe an honour. Or is it, that leſt mine enemies ſhould thinke it were done for feare of them, that he hydes me; he will ſet me upon a Rocke, as it were in defyance: and though ſome may be ſo bold to enter the ſecret of his Tabernacle; yet none will bee ſo deſperate, to venture upon a Rock, againſt which, all they can doe, is but to daſh themſelves in peeces, and to haſten their owne ruine.

And now, O my ſoule, how canſt thou doubt of thy being in ſafetie, having the three great fortreſſes of God for thy defence: his generall providence, which is his Pavillion: then, his ſpeciall Mercie, which is the ſecret of his Tabernacle: then, the Mediation of Chriſt, who is the Rocke; upon which, when thou art ſet, neither the raging of the Sea, nor the bluſtering of the wind, need to affright thee; for though they roare againſt thee, yet they cannot hurt thee; and of whom then, of what now ſhould I be afraid?

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For being set upon this Rock; *My head shall bee lifted up above mine enemies round about mee:* Though my feet may be in the water, yet my head shall be above water; I shall be in no danger, though perhaps in some trouble; and in no trouble neither, but such as while my head is lifted up, I may freely laugh at, and despise; and the rather, for that though my enemies be so many, as to be round about me; yet they are so meane, as to be all below mee; not meane in themselves, but meane through him, that hath lifted up my head above them. If mine enemies were but low, it were no great matter to be higher then they: but to have my head lifted up above them, who carry their heads so high, as to thinke none their equalls; this must needs be, as well to me a cause of joy; as in thee, O God, an effect of power. In thy lifting up my head, I regard not so much the honour, as the relation to my enemies; for whether it be lifted up little, or much, it is all one to mee, so long as it bee above my enemies, their pitch is my proportion: for the marke of my ayme, is not superiority, but securitie, not to shine in other mens eyes, but not to have mine owne put out. *Verse 6.*

There may be many causes of joy to a man in trouble, but none so great as this, to have his head lifted up above his enemies: for though to take revenge of an enemy, bee the delight onely of a cruell nature; yet to be able to take revenge,

revenge, is a joy to the mildest nature, but yet a joy that must bee made a sacrifice, not to grow insolent, and proud upon it; but as to receive the power with humilitie, so to use it with mildnesse, and most of all, to ascribe the glory, to whom it belongs.

There was a time, O God, when thou didst lift up mine enemies heads above me; and even then I offered thee a sacrifice too; but it was a sorrowfull sacrifice, a sacrifice of sorrow; but when thou shalt lift up my head above mine enemies, I will then offer thee a joyfull sacrifice, a sacrifice of joy: and it shall not bee a silent joy, as though I sought to smother it, by which no glory would come unto thee; but it shall be a singing joy, and the song shall bee of thy praises, as shewing me to joy more, in thy lifting me up; then in my being lift up; more for thy glory, then for my owne advancement, but sing I shall for both; I shall sing, to expresse my joy, and I shall sing to extoll thy Praises.

But why is *David* so suddenly turned from singing to crying, that hee should fall so presently to say; *Heare mee, O Lord, when I cry with my voyce?* Is it, that hee findes God, not well pleased with his singing; and therefore meanes to try, what hee can doe with crying? Or is it, that he thinkes himselfe better at expressing sorrow then joy, and therefore hopes his crying may be heard, though his singing bee not? Or is it indeed, that singing, and crying both,

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are little enough to make a sacrifice to God? Alas! they are both of them too little, to make an acceptable sacrifice, without Gods mercy: and therefore *David* trusts not to them alone, but is glad to joyne Gods mercy with them; *Have mercy also upon mee, O God, and answer mee.* It is a great mercy in God to heare us, but a greater mercy to answer us; and therefore to require his answer, requires a more speciall invocation of his mercy; and the rather, in hope to have a mercifull answer; for alas, if he should answer, and not in mercy, such an answer would be worse then silence.

But how can I doubt of Gods answering me, when I speake to him; who have my selfe answered him, when hee spake to mee? For when thou saydst; *Seeke yee my face; my heart said unto thee; Thy face Lord, I will seeke:* and for my heart to say it, is more then for my voyce to cry it: for no crying of the voyce, makes so loude a sound in the eares of God; as the saying of the heart; that to use the termes properly, I might rather say; I cry it with my heart, and but say it with my voyce. *Verse 8.*

But is this all the answer I shall have from God, that I should seeke his face? Alas! O Lord, thy great Favourite *Moses*, could never obtaine more then to see thy Back-parts, and how then can I hope to see thy face? and if I cannot hope to see it, why wouldst thou have me spend time to seeke it? But is it not all

one, in the phrase of the Law, to seeke Gods face; as in the phrase of the Gospell, to seeke Gods kingdome? and therefore as God saith here; *seeke yee my face:* so Christ saith there; *seeke Gods kingdome:* at least if they be not both one; they are both sought one way; both sought by following Gods Commandements, for his Commandements, if wee follow them well, will both bring us to his kingdome, and to see his face.

Or is it not perhaps in a plaine literall sence, that to seeke Gods face, is in our Prayers, and Meditations, to settle, and fixe the eyes of our mindes wholly upon God; and as it were, to looke him in the face: wherein, oh what infinite oddes there is betweene the Angels and us, for magnifying of God: for they behold his Face, and can see it visibly, where all that we can doe towards it, is onely by the strength of imagination, which God knowes is but weake; very weake in us, weake in it selfe, and weaker for want of intention; but if we could see his Face as the Angels doe; O my soule, we should see in it, not onely infinite causes for magnifying his Name; but infinite sweetnesse for pleasing our owne senses. For if the beauty of a carnall face, be so admirable, so pleasing, as that no earthly thing may bee compared to it; what extasie of admiration! what transcendencie of pleasure must needes be in the beautie of a spirituall Face! and specially that

that face, in which the fulneſſe of all Beauty reſideth bodily? And have I not cauſe then to ſeeke this Face? O mercifull God, grant me ſo to ſeeke it, that I may find it: for though this be not the place for finding it, yet this is the place for ſeeking it: and hee that ſeekes it not here, he that ſeekes it not now, is never like to find it in another place, never like to find it hereafter.

But why am I ſo haſtie, to promiſe God to ſeeke his Face, as though it were in my owne power to ſeeke it at my pleaſure? Alas! how can I chooſe but promiſe it, when God requires it; and how can I thinke, when hee requires it, but that hee will enable me, at leaſt, not hinder me to performe it? and yet I promiſe not performance, but Will: and Will I ſuppoſe I may ſafely promiſe, ſeeing Will is preſent with me, and can never be abſent from mee.

But when I ſeeke thy face, vouchſafe, O God, not to hide thy face from mee: for to what purpoſe ſhould I ſeek it, if I cannot find it? and what hope of finding it, if thou be bent to hide it? Alas! O Lord, to bid me ſeeke it, and then goe preſently and hide it from me; what were this but to mock me, as the Jewes mocked Chriſt; blindfold him, and ſtrike him; and then bid him tell, who ſtrooke him? and indeed how ſhould I ſeeke it, if I have not light to ſeeke it by? and what light to ſeeke it by? *Verſe 9.*

and what light to seeke it by, but the light of thy Countenance? and what light of thy Countenance, if thou hide away thy face? To bid me to seeke thy Face, and then to hide thy Face from me, were a kind of derision; and I hope, O God, thou wilt not use me so unkindly; set me about a worke scarce possible to bee done, and then take from mee all possible meanes of doing it? Alas! O Lord, all the encouragement I have to seeke it, is the hope I have thou wilt not hide it: O therefore, *Hide not thy face from mee, O God*: for if thou hide thy Face from me, what can I thinke, but that thou art angry? and if indeed thou be angry, yet use me at least as a servant; *Put mee not away in thine anger*: for though I have committed many heynous faults against thee, yet may I not repent, and amend them all, if thou but please, not to bee so hastie with mee? what though my sinnes have made thee angry, wilt thou therefore presently turne me away? will no lesse punishment, serve to appease thy displeasure, but to turne me presently out of service? mayst thou not in so doing, doe that in anger, which thou wilt have cause perhaps to be sorry for afterwards? wilt thou not leave thy selfe unprovided of servants to waite upon thee? For where are any such servants to be found, that some time or other, will not give thee cause to bee angry? If thou entertaine Starres to serve thee, is there not impu-

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ritie in the Starres? If entertaine Angels to serve thee; Didst thou not find folly in the Angels? Hast thou not promised to consider man, that he is but dust; and shall anger make thee to forget that Promise? Hath not Mercie the highest seat in thine Arke; and shall anger be able to put her from her seate? Thou hast beene my helper heretofore, and why didst thou helpe me, but because I needed thy assistance? and may I not with thy assistance now returne from my evill way; if thou be pleased not to be so hastie to turne me away? By thy helping me then, thou didst expresse thy loving me then; and why then should I feare, thou wilt now forsake mee? for whom thou lovest, thou lovest to the end; Not to the end, and then ends; but to the end, that shall never end. Shall the Heathen have cause, have colour of cause, to upbraid thee with inconstancie; that whom thou helpest at one time, thou forsakest at another? Or canst thou turne mee away in anger; and then helpe mee in mercy, when thou hast done? Canst thou so soone change from Mercy to Anger; and from Anger againe to Mercie; that we should never know in what temper to find thee? No my soule, farre be it from thee to have such thoughts: but the truth is, Gods wayes are not discerned, not discernable by us, they are past our finding out: We know nothing at any time, what it is he doth; lesse, why; and least of all, how hee

doth it: Both the substance, and the circumstance of all his actions, is to us an *Abyssus*; we know nothing of all his wayes but this, that all his wayes are Mercy, and Truth; nothing of his condition, but this, that in him, there is no change, nor shadow of change.

Verse 10. It is indeed the nature of all living creatures, though never so tender of their young ones; yet when they are growne to a ripenesse of age and strength, to turne them off, to shift for themselves; and even a Father and a Mother, as tender as they are, have yet somewhat of this common nature in them, for while their children are young, they leade them by the hand; but when they are growne up, they leave them to their owne legges; and if they chance to fall, let them rise as they can: but God, even then takes his children up, for hee knowes of what they are made; hee knowes their strength must as well be supported, as their weakenesse be assisted; hee knowes they must as well be taken up, when they fall, as be held up when they stand; and therefore though the tenderenesse of a Father be great, of a Mother perhaps greater; yet no comparison to be made with the tenderenesse of God. And seeing God is never without tenderenesse, why should I be ever without hope? and not hope as well to be delivered from trouble; as others to be preserved in safety? O my soule, much rather: for seeing all things in this world are subject

subject to change, is not that hope more like to succeed, which hopes for a change, then that which hopes for a continuance?

Verse 11. But seeing the way of thy tenderneſſe, is paſt our finding out; O therefore, *Doe thou, O God, teach mee thy way, and leade mee in a plaine path, becauſe of mine enemies.* Teach mee thy way, how it can ſtand with tenderneſſe to thy children, to ſuffer them to be afflicted, when thou ſuffereſt the wicked to live in proſperitie? To make Martyrs of thy ſervants, when the wicked flouriſh, and live at eaſe? How it can ſtand with thy tenderneſſe, to take away thy ſervants, in the midſt of their dayes; often-times in the beginning, when thou ſuffereſt the wicked of the world, to runne out the full races of long lives? Why thou leadeſt the godly in paths of temptations, when thou leadeſt the wicked in paths of ſecuritie? But if theſe wayes of thine, be too hard for me to learne; or if thy pleaſure bee not to reveale them as yet, at leaſt, O God, *Leade me in a plaine path, becauſe of mine enemies:* If it were not for mine enemies, I would never make this ſuite unto thee; but would leave it to thee, to leade me in what paths thou pleaſeſt: but having the eyes of ſo many enemies upon me; if thou ſhouldſt leade me now, in a rugged path, where I might chance to ſtumble, or fall; would not my enemies triumph at it, as at a victory? for they marke ever ſtep I take, to watch what advantge

vantage they can find againſt me; and if they ſhould find me tripping never ſo little, I were ſure to be made the Anvile of their malice, to be beaten upon, without either pitty or compaſſion. But how great ſoever their malice be; I know they can doe nothing without leave; Thou onely, O God, haſt an abſolute power over me; My enemies, none, but by thy permiſſion: and I hope, thou wilt retaine thy power in thine owne hands; at leaſt, not make my enemies, thy deligates. To thy will I willingly ſubmit my ſelfe: but *Deliver mee not over, to the will of my enemies*: for thy will, when moſt ſevere, is yet with compaſſion; but their will, when moſt gentle, is alwayes with cruelty: And I ſpeake not this upon a bare ſuſpition; but I have evident prooſes for what I ſay; For, *falſe witneſſes are riſen up againſt mee; and ſuch as breath out crueltie.* I deſired indeed to bee led in a plaine path; to the end I might walke upright, both before God and men; that ſo I might give my enemies no cauſe of offence; doe nothing whereof I might bee juſtly accuſed: but alas, what good hath my integritie done me? for ſo great is my enemies malice againſt me; that when they cannot charge mee truly, they accuſe me falſely: and becauſe they would not be ſeene in it themſelves, they ſuborne witneſſes: and becauſe one witneſſe would not be ſufficient, Many; and leſt their witneſſes ſhould be apt to relent; they have

Verſe 12.

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gotten ſuch, as breath out crueltie; ſuch as make crueltie their living, and trade I may ſay, in no wares but cruell. Though I have a thouſand witneſſes of my innocencie; my owne conſcience; yet theſe witneſſes will not bee heard in the Courts of the world: Alas no, I know one, an innocent indeed, who had greater witneſſes then theſe, the witneſſes of his pious and wonderfull, and wonderfull pious workes; yet neither would theſe be taken for witneſſes of his innocencie; but in the Courts of the world, hee was condemned as guiltie.

O my ſoule, I had utterly fainted under this burden, if it had not beene for one thing; *If I had not beleeved to ſee the goodneſſe of the Lord, in the land of the living.* The onely hope of this, hath kept me from fainting: and how could it chooſe? being a Cordiall made up of three ſoveraigne Ingredients; a hope to ſee; and to ſee the goodneſs of God; and the goodneſs of God in the land of the living: three ſuch Ingredients, that he muſt be one of a very faint heart, whom ſuch a Cordiall will not keepe from fainting. *Verſe 13.*

But what ingredient of comfort, is a hope to ſee? for doe I not ſee now, as well as I am like to doe hereafter? were not our firſt Parents eyes opened in Paradiſe; and can wee hope to ſee better, then they ſaw there? and doe not our eyes ſtand as open as theirs ſtill? O my ſoule, the opening of their eyes then,

hath made us see the worse ever since: wee see now, but as in a Glasse, rather appearances of things, then things themselves; we see nothing now but colours, and colours are deceitfull, and no trusting to them: the light I hope for, is to see, as I am seene; a sight not subject to either dimnesse, or dazeling: a sight that discerneth not onely colours, but substances; and is not the hope of such a sight, a comfortable Ingredient to keepe from fainting?

But yet what good is it, to see goodnesse? for we see many good things, which yet wee are never the better for seeing: But is it not true here, *Vidisse & gustare?* for such our seeing shall be, *Videbimus & gustabimus*; our seeing shall be a tasting, our tasting, an enjoying, and enjoying is not properly of any thing, but in which there is joy, and where there is joy, must there not needs be comfort?

But yet what more goodnesse of God can wee hope to see hereafter, then now? for can there bee a greater goodnesse of God to bee seene then this, that hee makes the Sunne to shine, the raine to fall, upon both just and unjust? Wee see indeed now a great goodnesse of God: but wee see it mingled with much badnesse of men; and may I not say with some badnesse of his too? for is there any evill in the Citie, and God hath not done it? but the goodnesse of God which I hope to see, is a goodnesse like to garbled spice, without

without any mixture at all of refuse stuffe amongst it: a goodnesse not mingled with either evill of men, or evill to men; but pure and Impermixt as God himselfe is. The goodnesse of God which we see now, is a goodnesse in effects; but there is a goodnesse in God, which is as the cause: Not as having goodnesse, but as being goodnesse: Not onely as imparting it selfe to us, but as communicating it selfe with us; and this goodnesse wee shall then see, though now we cannot. Have Philosophers conceived, that if vertue could be seene with the eyes, *Mirabiles excitaret amores sui*; It would stirre up in us a wonderfull love; and will not the goodnesse of God, when seene with our eyes, stirre up in our hearts, a wonderfull joy? and is not the hope of such a joy a strong Cordiall to keepe from fainting?

But why in the land of the living? for is not the world in which wee now live, the land of the living? Are there not, in the water, living fishes? in the Ayre, living Birds? On the Earth, living Trees, living Beasts, living Men? and what can be thought of, more then these, to make a Land of the living? Alas! what Land of the living is this, in which there are more dead then living; more under ground, then are above it: where the earth is fuller of graves then houses; where life lyes trembling under the hand of Death, and where Death hath power to tyrannize over

life? No my ſoule, there onely is the Land of the living, where there are none but the living; where there is a Church not Militant, but Triumphant, a Church indeed, but no Churchyard, becauſe none dead, nor none that can dye: where life is not paſſive; nor Death active: where Life ſits crowned; and where Death is ſwallowed up in victorie. And now make up a Compound of theſe Ingredients: Take firſt, a Hope of ſeeing, which is enjoying: then the goodneſſe of God, not a qualitie, but a ſubſtance: then the Land of the living, where there is no dying: and now ſay, if ſuch a Cordial muſt not needs be ſtrong, of neceſſitie be effectuall, to keepe from fainting? O therefore my ſoule, bee ſure to provide thee good ſtore of this Cordiall, that if at any time thou be oppreſſed, with either multitude, or malice; if at any time falſe witneſſes bee riſen up againſt thee; if enemies at any time come upon thee, to eat up thy fleſh; thou maiſt have this Cordiall in a readineſſe, and be able to ſay; Doe the worſt you can, I feare you not; for I beleeve to ſee the goodneſſe of God in the Land of the living. This not onely will keepe thee from fainting, but wil fill thy ſpirits, with extaſie of joy: for it is grounded upon a principle of comfort, delivered by Saint *Paul*; *The afflictions of this life, are not worthy of the glory that ſhall be revealed*: And what is this glory, but to ſee the goodneſſe of God? and where

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to be revealed, but in the Land of the living?

But all this yet, is but the hope of a Cordiall; at most, but a Cordiall of hope: but when will the Cordiall it selfe, that is hoped for, bee had? May I not stay so long waiting for it, that I may be weary with waiting, and faint with wearinesse? and then the Cordiall will come too late? No my soule, *Waite on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall give thee strength:* for as none is so worthy to be waited on, as God; so nothing is so worthy to be waited for, as this Cordiall: and never feare wearinesse by long waiting for it, so long as thou waitest upon God for it: for, God that gives power to the Cordiall, to keepe thee from fainting, will give power to thy waiting, to keepe it from wearinesse. Onely bee sure to have a good heart, and God will not faile to supply it with spirits: Doe thou but onely bring wood to the Sacrifice, and God will send fire from Heaven to kindle it. *Verse* 14.

But how happens it, that *David* should give so good counsell to others, and yet follow it so ill himselfe? for hee confesseth of himselfe in another place; that *hee is dejected, and bowed downe*; and can it stand with courage, to be dejected? But is it not, that to be dejected, is a Passive infirmitie, to be couragious, an Active vertue; and there is no contradiction, to bee Passively weake, and Actively strong, both at once. Or is it not indeed rather, that when he

confesseth himselfe to be dejected, hee lookes upon his sinne; and sinne will deject any, that hath but eyes, and is able to see it; but when hee counsells to be couragious, hee lookes upon God; and God is ready to give strength to any, that hath but a heart, and is able to take it. As therefore I said before, so I say againe; *Waite on the Lord:* which can never be too much taught, because never enough be learned; never be too much said, because never be enough done.

THE

THE THIRTIETH PSALME OF DAVID.

1 I Will extoll thee, O Lord; for thou haſt lifted me up, and haſt not made my foes to rejoyce over me.

2 O Lord, my God, I cryed unto thee; and thou haſt healed mee.

3 O Lord, thou haſt brought up my ſoule from the grave; thou haſt kept mee alive, that I ſhould not goe downe to the pit.

4 Sing unto the Lord, all yee Saints of his; and give thankes at the remembrance of his boline ſſe.

5 For his anger endureth but a moment; weeping

ping may endure for a night; but joy commeth in the morning.

6 *And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved.*

7 *Lord by thy favour thou hast made my mountaine to stand strong; Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.*

8 *I cryed unto thee, O Lord; and unto the Lord, I made supplication.*

9 *What profit is there in my bloud, when I goe downe into the pit? shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?*

10 *Heare, O Lord; have mercy upon mee; Lord be thou my helper.*

11 *Thou hast turned for mee, my mourning into dauncing: Thou hast put off my sack-cloath, and girded mee with gladnesse.*

12 *To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent; O Lord, my God, I will give thankes unto thee for ever.*

MEDI-

MEDITATIONS
VPON THE XXX. PSALME OF *DAVID.*

IT ſeemes to be a courſe in Nature, for Hoſanna's alwayes to precede Allelujahs; and therefore the Exordiums of *Davids* Pſalmes are commonly thus; *Have mercy upon mee, O God: heare my prayer, O Lord, rebuke mee not in thine anger*: or ſome ſuch forme of Hoſanna: but in this Pſalme, contrary to his cuſtome, he makes his *Exordium* of an Allelujah: *I will extoll thee, O God*: And why is this done? is it out of Devotion, that he might get before-hand, and begin with God in Praiſes, before God ſhould begin with him in Benefits? O my ſoule, the ſhowres of Gods bleſſings are ſo continually poured downe upon us, that it is impoſſible we ſhould ever get before hand with God in Allelujahs. Although *Verſe* 1.

therefore he begin with an Allelujah, yet it is becauſe God hath prevented him in his Hoſanna: Hee will extoll God, but it is becauſe God hath lifted him up: Gods praiſe indeed is put in the Preſent Tenſe, but it is becauſe his benefit is in the Preterperfect Tenſe: *I will extoll thee, O God; for thou haſt lifted mee up, and haſt not made my foes to rejoyce over me.*

But if *David* will extoll God; how will he doe it? for to doe it unworthily, it were better to be left undone, and who is able to extoll God worthily? Hee will therefore perhaps call all the creatures of God to aſſiſt him, and ſay; *Praiſe the Lord, all yee his Angels; Praiſe him all his Hoſts; praiſe yee him Sun and Moone; praiſe him all yee ſtarres of light: Let every thing that hath breath, praiſe the Lord.* But if it be expected he muſt extoll him himſelfe, and not looke for helpe from others; Hee will then extoll him in his exaltation, and ſay; *Bee thou exalted, O God, above the heavens:* Or, he will extoll him in his owne humilitie, by kneeling, and falling downe before him: hee will extoll him in his ſingularitie, and ſay; There is no other God in heaven, or in earth, but onely, thou O God: or he will extoll him in his pluralitie, and ſay; Thou, O God, art wonderfull in thy Being; Three Perſons, and one God, bleſſed for ever. And if to extoll him with ſayings will not ſerve, he will then extoll him with workes, that men ſeeing his good workes, may glorifie

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our Father which is in heaven. And if neither words nor workes will be sufficient, hee will then extoll him with his silence, and his wonder; leaving that for Thought which cannot be expreſt: and leaving that for astoniſhment which cannot be conceived.

But why is it that *David* will thus extoll God? Is it, that hee may returne a thankfulneſſe answerable to the benefit: returne it in the same kind, and answer it, as it were in its owne language? He will therefore extoll God, which is a kind of lifting God up: because God hath lifted him up, which is a kind of extolling of him. For as our extolling of God, is the higheſt worke of our thankfulneſſe; so Gods lifting us up, is the greateſt benefit of his goodneſſe. We are thankfull to God, and ought to be, for his other benefits, even for casting us downe: but we uſe not to extoll him, but for lifting us up: For naturally indeed, wee are all of us desirous to bee lifted up; to be set aloft, and to be high in the world: for this pleaseth the eyes, that they may see the more, and pleaseth the whole body, that it may the more bee seene: but this is not the lifting up that *David* meanes; but to be lifted up out of danger; and out of the reach of the arme of his enemies. O my soule, let this bee thy comfort, that although thy enemies be many, and great, yet they are not more thy enemies, then they are Gods slaves; and can goe no further, then the

length of their chaine, which is ſeldome ſo long to reach to triumphing. Sathan was a bitter enemie to *Job*, and had certainly defeated him utterly, if God had not held him ſhort in his chaine; and though linke after linke, hee eetched out his chaine to a great length, yet he could never make it reach ſo farre, as to a Triumph. For it is not properly a Triumph, but when *Dux Duci arma detrahit*; When one Generall diſarmes another: and this could never be done to *Job*; for he kept on his Armour ſtill; his Helmet of Faith; and his Breſt-plate of Righteouſneſſe, hee never let it goe off from him: that there could be no cauſe for Sathan to triumph. Men commonly are not ſatiſfied, unleſſe themſelves can triumph over their enemies: but it is enough for me, O Lord, that thou ſuffer not my enemies to triumph over me: for I aime not at glory, but at ſafetie; I might then ayme at glory, if I were the aſſailant: but now that I am onely the aſſailed; what can I more deſire then ſafetie, and to bee out of the reach of all my enemies? and ſuch ſafetie, without any glory, may well give contentment, ſeeing of all the miſeries that can befall a man in this wretched world; there is none greater, none ſo great, as to fall into the hands of enemies, whoſe Malice, like the fire of Hell, is commonly unquenchable. Let a friend ſtrike me, and it ſhall be a Balme to my head; but to be ſtrucken by an enemie, who can endure

dure it? The ſtriking of a friend is out of love, and intends amendment; but the blowes of an enemie are out of malice, and tend to ruine. It troubles mee not, that my enemies rejoyce, ſo their rejoycing have no relation to mee: It troubled not *Samſon* ſo much, to have his eyes put out, as to bee brought out before his enemies, to be the laughing-ſtock for them to rejoyce at.

But why will *David* ſpeake thus; *Thou haſt not made my enemies to rejoyce over me:* as though it were God, that made our enemies to rejoyce over us, and not their owne ſpitefulneſſe and malice? Is it, that permiſſion is in God a kind of action; and therefore he may juſtly be ſaid to doe that, which he ſuffers to be done? Or is it, that in his anger, he makes our enemies the Executioners of his juſtice: and puniſheth our neglect of rejoycing in him, with giving them power to rejoyce over us? and ſo their rejoycing, is not more in us, his judgement; then it is in them his act and operation.

But what enemies do we talk of, all this while? worldly minds have no feare, but of worldly enemies; and from ſuch, perhaps worldly friends may free them: but the ſpirituall man feares rather ſpiritual enemies; and who can free them from ſuch, but onely thou, O God, that art the God of ſpirits? O mercifull God, let not ſpirituall enemies have the victory over mee; and I make no great reckoning of other ene-

mies triumphing: Alas! I know that worldly enemies can never triumph over me, if spirituall enemies get not first the victory.

And now, O my soule, if God have done this for me, have lifted me up above these enemies, above these enemies of both kindes, have I not a double cause to extoll him for it, and to praise his Name? And yet I may say, I extoll him not more for doing it, then for his readinesse of doing it; *For I cryed unto him, and hee healed mee:* I no sooner cryed, but hee heard me; he no sooner heard me, but he healed me; My suite was no sooner made, then granted; My disease as soone cured, as discovered; hee kept me not languishing, by drawing out his cure in length; but he applyed a present remedy, and prevented Hope with haste. As therefore I extolled him before for his love, in lifting me up above my enemies; so I must extoll him now for his compassion, in being moved to doe it, for my onely crying to him; I used no intercessour, but my owne voyce, and hee healed me; and for God to be moved with the cry of a wretched sinner, and so to be moved, as presently to heale him; Is it not a just cause to extoll him, and say; O the wonderfull bowels of compassion that are in God?

Verse 3. To be lifted up from any place, is an act of Power; but the lower the place is, it is the greater act of Mercie; and can there be a lower place then the Grave? at least, then the grave of

of the Soule? and from this low place, was *David* lifted up, as yee may heare himselfe say; *Thou, O Lord, hast brought up my soule from the grave; Thou hast kept mee alive, that I should not goe downe into the pit.* But is not this a strange speech in *David*, as though there were a grave of the Soule, as there is of the Body? for if there be not, how then is it true, that God hath brought up his soule from the Grave? Is it perhaps, that he calls it the Soule, which is but the cementing of the Body, and life together? or that he calls it the Grave of the Soule, when it is in the lowest estate of vivifying the Body? What ever it be, it shewes a great mercy in God, and a great power of that mercy, to raise him up, that was brought so low, and to keepe him from falling into the Pit, that was fallen already to the pits brinke. The truth is, that as sinne is the death of the Soule, so continuance in sinne, is the grave of the Soule; and in this Grave of continuance, did *Davids* soule lye a long time: (Alas! the shortest time, in this case is long) till God by his quickning Spirit, restored him againe to the life of Grace; that hee had just cause to say; *Thou, O Lord, hast brought up my soule from the grave, and hast kept mee alive, that I should not goe downe into the Pit.* Oh how many there are that have bodyes walking above ground, when their soules are lying in the Grave? that are lustie and strong in the naturall life; when in the spirituall life, they are

are dead and buryed? yet ſo long as they lye not buried above foure dayes, ſo long as they continue not in ſin ſo long, till it have brought the Soule into an abſolute corruption; there is example in *Lazarus*, and where there is Example, there is hope, they may be raiſed againe to life, and be kept from falling into the Pit of perdition. And now, O my ſoule, though God have not lifted thee up to as high a place; yet ſeeing he hath lifted thee up from as low a place, as he did *David*: haſt thou not as juſt cauſe as he to ſay; *I will extoll thee, O God; for thou haſt lifted mee up, and haſt not ſuffered my enemies, ſinne, and death, to triumph over mee.* And here I find my ſelfe ſo oppreſſed with joy, that I am not able to expreſſe it without aſſiſtance; and what aſſiſtance can I looke for, but from the Saints of God? O therefore *ſing unto the Lord, all yee ſaints of his; give thankes unto him at the remembrance of his Holineſſe.* It is not enough to praiſe him, if yee doe not ſing his praiſes; for it muſt be done with cheareful-neſſe, and exultation; and it is not enough to ſing, if yee doe not praiſe him; for your joy muſt be in him, and for him: in his goodneſſe, and for his glory.

If it were to ſing of another thing, I ſhould require the whole Quire of Gods creatures, to joyne in the ſinging; but now, that it is to ſing of Gods holineſſe, what ſhould prophane voyces doe in the Conſort? None but Saints are fit

fit to ſing of holineſſe, and ſpecially of Gods holineſſe; but moſt ſpecially with ſongs of holineſſe. O therefore *ſing to the Lord, all yee ſaints of his*; and let your ſongs, be more of his praiſes, then of your owne thankfulneſſe: and let your thankfulneſſe, not be ſo much for the benefits which you have received; as for the holineſſe with which they are beſtowed: for God gives not his benefits, as the world uſeth to doe, out of any corrupt affection, or with any corrupt intention; but there is a holineſſe in his giving, as well as in his gifts; and ſeeing the Cherubins, and Seraphins doe continually cry to God; Holy, Holy, Holy: You that are his Saints may well afford to ſing to God, at the remembrance of his holineſſe.

But what holineſſe can there be in Anger? *Verſe 5.* and is there not anger in God ſometimes? and will not this then bee a cauſe, rather of weeping to thinke of his anger; then of ſinging, at the remembrance of his holineſſe? O my ſoule, this need be no cauſe to breake off the ſinging; *for his anger endureth but a moment*; and even anger it ſelfe, is in God a holineſſe; It is none of the things that are naturall, and permanent in God; It is but forced upon him by the violence of ſinne; and as forced as it is, it ſtayes not with him; it is but as a wind that paſſeth; *Dum oritur moritur*; It dyes in the birth; Nothing lives, and is permanent in God, but onely his favour, and his love, and therefore,

Though weeping may endure for a night, yet joy commeth in the morning. And ſeeing our life is of this condition, that heavineſſe ſometimes muſt as well be had as joy; it is happy for us, they are ſo diſpoſed, that heavineſſe comes but in the Evening, when wee may ſleepe it out; and when our ſenſes are apt to be tyed up from feeling it: but joy commeth in the Morning; when all our ſenſes are waking to entertaine it. What is the Evening, but the end of the day? and what is the Evening of our life, but the end of our dayes? and in this Evening indeed there is commonly heavineſſe; weeping for parting of friends that have lived together: but this heavineſſe is removed aſſoone as morning comes; for what is the Morning, but when the Sunne riſeth againe? and what is our Morning, but when we ſhall riſe againe? and as when this morning comes, there will bee a day that ſhall have no more Evening; ſo when this joy comes, all teares ſhall be wiped from our eyes, and there ſhall be no more weeping. Indeed all our great joyes have ever come in the morning: It was a Joy that came in the morning, at the Birth of Chriſt; It was a Joy that came in the morning, at the Reſurrection of Chriſt; It was a Joy that came in the morning, at the Deſcending of the Holy Ghoſt upon the Apoſtles; and theſe Joyes were then ſo great, that they have made us Feaſts ever ſince: (*Our Chriſtmaſſe, our Eaſter, and our Whitſontide:*)

sontide:) yet these Joyes had their heavinesse preceding: the Joy of Christs birth, had the heavinesse of his Mothers flight; the Joy of Christs Resurrection, had the heavinesse for his Passion: the Joy of the Descending of the Holy Ghost, the heavinesse for Christs departing: but these heavinesses were so presently followed with joyes, that it hath made this Aphorisme be found true still; *Heavinesse may endure for a night, but joy commeth in the morning.* And now, O my soule, what need it trouble thee, to have heavinesse in the Evening, so long as thou art sure to have joy in the morning? What need it trouble thee to be weeping for a time, when thou art sure of rejoycing, when time shall be no more?

Hitherto I have beene busie about singing Gods praises, for lifting mee up, which hath beene his worke; Now I must leave singing, and come to saying, to speake of my owne worke; *And I said in my prosperitie, I shall never be moved:* but alas, if my singing were no better then my saying, it had beene better for me, to have held my peace in both: for what a saying is this, to say; *I shall never be moved?* Is there any Mountaine so strong, that it cannot be moved? and if no Mountaine, how any man? but this is the insolent language of prosperitie, to give over crying to God, and fall a boasting of it selfe. Alas! Prosperitie hath neither good tongue, nor good eyes; as it *Verse 6.* *Verse 7.*

made *David* ſay, hee ſhould never be moved; ſo it made him thinke it enough, that God by his favour had made his Mountaine ſtrong; but as for the maintaining it ſtrong, to arrogate that to himſelfe: when God knowes, if once we leave depending upon God, and arrogate any thing to our ſelves, our Mountaine will ſoone bee turned into a Valley, and our ſtrength will goe from us, as it did from *Samſon*, when his haire was cut off; and this makes *David* ſay now; *Thou didſt hide thy face, and I was troubled:* for as it is the favour of God, that makes our Mountaine ſtrong; and our Mountaine being ſtrong, wee are kept from trouble: ſo it is the hiding of Gods face, that makes our moutaine weake; and our mountaine being weake, wee are preſently troubled; but rather indeed, if God doe not as well maintaine our mountaine ſtrong, as make it ſtrong, we ſhall quickly bring our Mountaine to a Mole-hill; wee ſhall quickly either fall our ſelves from our Mountaine; or have our mountaine to fall upon us.

Wee ſee the Earth hath no comfort but in the Sunne; and therefore if the Sunne bee removed, the Earth preſently puts on Blacks; is pincht with cold, and covered with darkneſſe: That which the Sunne is to the Earth; thy Face, O God, is to me, and what marvell then, when thou hideſt thy face; if I bee left, as a diſconſolate Earth, in trouble and mourning:

ning? God useth not to hide his face from any that depend upon him; and therefore as long as I put my trust and confidence in him, he was to me as a strong Mountain; I enjoyed his favour, and the light of his Countenance; but assoone as I left depending upon him, and trusted to my owne strength, my Mountaine was suddenly turned into a Valley; and I was left alas in a vale of miserie. O therefore, my soule, notwithstanding any prosperitie whatsoever; Doe thou depend upon God for thy Mountaine, both for making it strong, and for maintaing it strong, and never bee moved to say, thou shalt never be moved; for to bee immovable, is a priviledge of God himselfe, and of God alone, and is not communicable to any creature. It is a false saying in any estate to say; *I shall never be moved*; but in prosperitie, falsest of all: for hee that is in prosperitie, stands in a slipperie place, and such a place is not capable of stabilitie. What is prosperitie but an earthy thing? and can any thing that is earthy be secure from moving, when the body of the Earth it selfe is moved? O my soule, the consideration of this; Alas! the feeling of this hath made mee leave, both singing, and saying, and fall to my crying againe: *I cryed to thee, O Lord; and unto the Lord I made supplication:* Indeed crying is the voyce of a suppliant, and the fittest voyce for a supplication: but yet why should *David* tell God of his *Verse* 8.

crying to him, and say; *I cryed to thee, O Lord*; as though God knew it not, without his telling it? No doubt, God knew of his crying, for how else did he heare it? and of his supplication; for how else could hee grant it? and therefore it seemes, hee tells it not so much to God, as to us; that wee may take notice, with what sacrifices God is pleased. For as there are divers sacrifices that are acceptable to God: so each of them, in the due time, is the fittest, and most acceptable: singing, fittest after a benefit obtained; and crying, fittest for obtaining a benefit: Allelujahs fittest, when wee are in triumph: Hosanna's, fittest when we are in distresse. And therefore being at the present, in perill of his life; and delivered as it were into the hands of Death; the sacrifice he offers now, is a supplication; which yet seemes not so much a supplication, as an Expostulation; *What profit is there in my bloud, when I goe downe into the pit? shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?* If I goe downe into the Pit, shall I not bee turned into dust? and is dust good for any thing, but to be food for the Serpent? May I not doe thee better service above ground, then under it? Alas! I shall be there but in the company of Wormes, poore silly things, that are not capable of knowing thee: I am here, in the societie of reasonable creatures, with whom I may joyne in extolling thy Praises. Hast thou not breathed into

Verse 9.

into mee the breath of life, and wilt thou draw in thy breath so quickly againe, and leave mee but dust, as thou foundest me at first? Though the service I can doe thee be not great, yet it is more then dust can doe: Hath dust a tongue, or a voyce, or any instruments of life, for the declaring of thy truth? and why then wilt thou make a divorce of parts, which thou hast joyned together of purpose, for that purpose? If I desired life for any end of my owne, thou hadst just cause then, to make an end of my life; but now that I desire it, to doe thee service, why wilt thou diminish the number of thy servants, and not leave enow for the service thou hast to doe? Can any number be sufficient to praise thee? Can there ever be mouthes enow to declare thy Truth? and may not I make one, a sinfull one I know; but yet one in the number, if thou but please to spare mee for descending into the Pit? But what Pit? I meane not the Pit, where the Apostate Angels are; I know they descended not, but fell; and I know the Pit they fell into, is a Pit of blasphemie: the Pit I feare descending into, is but a Pit of silence, and yet in one thing, is worse then theirs; for they in their Pit, retaine their substance still; but I in this, shall lose my very Being; at least, the *quantitas continua* of my body, shall bee turned into the *quantitas Discreta* of dust: and the frame compacted of all the Elements dissolved, I shall remaine

remaine nothing, but as it were a few crummes of Earth; and what can Earth doe, when it is not assisted with fire and water? O therefore,

Verse 10. *Heare, O Lord; and have mercy upon me, Lord, bee thou my helper:* for if thou lend mee not thine eare, how can I hope thou wilt shew mee mercy? and if thou have not mercy upon me, how can I hope thou wilt bee my helper? Heare me, O God, while I am in a place, where I may be heard; for if once I be descended into the Pit, I shall quite then be out of all hearing. Have mercy upon me, while I am capable of mercy; for if once I be turned into dust, what mercy can I looke for? Be thou my helper, O God, now that I am in a state to bee helped; for if my bloud in which my life consists bee once shed; what good then will thy helpe doe me? I place Gods mercy in the midst here, because it must serve to both the other; both to make God to heare me, and to make him to helpe me: and Gods mercy can doe both; it can make him to heare me, though I were silent; and can make him to helpe me, though I were dust. But though Gods mercy can doe it, am I sure it will doe it? O my soule, his mercy hath done it already: for it is the worke of his mercy, that *Hee hath turned my mourning into dauncing, that hee hath put off my sackcloth, and girded mee with gladnesse.* O wonderfull conversion; the very same myracle, I may say, that Christ wrought at the Mariage in

Cana,

Cana, for to turne Mourning into Dauncing; what is it, but to turne water into Wine? To have turned my mourning, but into comfort, had beene a great worke, and a great favour: but to turne my mourning into dauncing; the extremitie of ſorrow, into extremitie of joy; who could doe this, but thou onely, O God; with whom, as no Myracles are wonders, ſo no extremities are limits. Mourning is not properly, but for one that is dead: and indeed ſo neere being dead was I, that I might well be ſaid to mourne for my owne death: not unlike the Swan, if it be true, that ſhee ſings her owne Elegie: and now to have my mourning turned into dauncing, the drooping act for Death, be turned into the moſt lively act of Life: what is it, but the Myracle, as it were, of Reſurrection, and Aſcention both at once? at leaſt, from the loweſt ſtayre of miſerie, to be raiſed to the higheſt of happineſſe: and not *Gradatim*, by degrees and ſteps, but *per ſaltum*, by a motion more ſwift, than the Fiery Chariot, that carried up *Elias* into Heaven: and ſo the change not more wonderfull, then the ſuddenneſſe; Mourning turned into Dauncing, a wonderfull change, and done, as it were, in the turning of a hand, as wonderfull a ſuddenneſſe.

And now to make me fit for Dauncing; *Thou haſt put off my ſackcloth, and girded me with gladneſſe*: for indeed, if I had kept on my ſackcloth ſtill, I ſhould have made but a heavie

Dauncer; but now, that my ſackcloth is off, and I am girded with gladneſſe, I ſhall leape as light, as *Abraham* did, to ſee thy day.

I put on ſackcloth when I was a Mourner; but now that I am to be a Dauncer, I am girded with gladneſs: and if I mourned before, to think of Gods anger; may I not juſtly daunce now, to thinke of his favour? If I put on ſackcloth before, as ſorrowing for my ſinne; may I not juſtly now be girded with gladneſſe, as rejoycing in my Saviour? For though it be Gods mercy, that hath done this for me, yet it is his mercy in Chriſt my Saviour: without whom, his mercy alone would never have done it: He would never have put off my ſackcloth, and girded me with gladneſſe, but for his ſake, and through his meanes, that was anoynted with the Oyle of gladneſſe above his fellowes. My ſackcloth was but a looſe garment about mee, which might eaſily be put off at pleaſure, but my gladneſſe is girt about me, to bee faſt and ſure, and cannot leave me, though it would; at leaſt, none ſhall be able to take it from me.

And now, though this be ſpoken here in the caſe of *David*, yet it may bee conceived as in Type for all the godly: if they mourne, and lye in ſackcloth now; yet they ſhall ere long be girded with Gladneſſe, and daunce for joy; but what Dauncing? Not like that of *Herodias* Daughter, for which *Herod* allowed her to aske halfe his Kingdome; but like that of *David*

vid before the Arke; for which God without asking, will give us a whole Kingdome. And when shall the time bee? Alas! it cannot be long: For they shall not goe out of *Egypt* into *Canaan*, as the old Israelites did, by the tedious passages of a troublesome Wildernesse; but their Mourning shall be turned into Dauncing: a conversion as sudden, as when *Moses* his Leprous hand was turned to be sound againe, by putting it onely in his bosome.

But to what end is it, that God hath done this for me? It may be thought, because hee hath turned my Mourning into Dauncing, and hath girded me with Gladnesse, that hee hath done it to this end, that I might live in jollity, and spend my time with *Belshazzar*, in revelling and feasting: but there is no such matter: hee hath done it to this end, *that my glory may sing praise unto him, and not bee silent*: to this end, that not onely I may praise him, but my sing his praises; and not onely that I, but that my glory may sing them; and alas what glory have I? doth not all glory belong to God? Indeed so it is, my glory then sings his Prayses, when I ascribe to him all praise and glory; my glory then sings his prayses, when I praise him with all I have to glory in, with all the faculties and powers of my soule and body; those especially in which I was made after his Image, for this is my Glory. *Verse* 12.

If this then bee the end that God intends,

shall I be so ungratefull, to crosse his intentions? if hee have given mee a Tongue, and a Voyce to serve him; shall I hold my peace, and be silent in his service? if he have turned my Mourning into Dauncing; shall I bee sullen, and slow to sing his Prayses? Alas! my Dauncing can never be kindly without Musick; and what musick so fit for it, as singing? and what singing so fit, as to the Ditty of his Prayses? O my soule, seeing God hath procured thee libertie to Daunce, thou mayst well afford to find the musick: and yet neither my Dauncing shall hearken to the musicke, nor my singing shall looke toward the Dauncing; but my Singing and my Dauncing both, shall bee addressed, and directed to God alone. Shall my heart be so set upon my joy, as to make me forget the Authour of my joy? No, O God, my joy hath so sure a foundation, that I can never be unmindfull of the Founder: *I will give thankes to thee, O Lord, my God, for ever.* Not for a time which will cease; Not as long as the Sunne and Moone endure, which shall not alwayes endure; not as long as I have breath in my body; No my soule, but as long as thou thy selfe hast Being; which being breathed into mee by God, shall never cease; shall alwayes endure; shall be for ever.

When I extolled God, I had relation to his Omnipotencie: when I sung his Prayses, to his Mercie; and now that I give him thankes

for

for ever, to his Eternitie: that now I may conclude, and say; O Almightie, most Mercifull, and ever-living God; to thee be ascribed all Honour, Prayse, and Glory, world without end.

THE THIRTIE FOVRTH PSALME OF *DAVID.*

1 *I Will blesse the Lord at all times; his Prayse shall continually bee in my mouth.*

2 *My soule shall make her boast in the Lord; The humble shall heare thereof, and be glad.*

3 *O magnifie the Lord with mee, and let us exalt his Name together.*

4 *I sought the Lord, and hee heard me; and delivered me from all my feares.*

5 *They looked unto him, and were lightened; and their faces were not ashamed.*

6 *The poore man cryed, and the Lord heard him;*

him; and ſaved him from all his troubles.

7 The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that feare him; and delivereth them.

8 O taſt, and ſee how good the Lord is; Bleſſed is the man that truſteth in him.

9 O feare the Lord, yee his Saints; for there is no want to them that feare him.

10 The young Lyons doe lacke, and ſuffer hunger: but they that ſeeke the Lord, ſhall not want any good thing.

11 Come yee children; hearken unto me, and I will teach you the feare of the Lord.

12 What man is he that deſireth life; and loveth many dayes, that he may ſee good?

13 Keepe thy tongue from evil; and thy lips from ſpeaking guile.

14 Depart from evil and doe good: ſeeke peace, and purſue it.

15 The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous; and his eares are open to their cry.

16 The face of the Lord, is againſt them that doe evil; to cut off their remembrance from the earth.

17 The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth: and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

18 The

18 *The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and ſaveth ſuch as be of a contrite ſpirit.*

19 *Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.*

20 *Hee keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken.*

21 *Evill ſhall ſlay the wicked; and they that hate the righteous, ſhall be deſolate.*

22 *The Lord redeemeth the ſoule of his ſervants; and none of them that truſt in him ſhall be deſolate.*

N MEDI-

MEDITATIONS VPON THE XXXIV. PSALME OF *DAVID*.

ALas! what a Vow is this that *David* makes here? a Vow which hee is ſure before hand, he cannot keepe: for is it poſſible for any man to bleſſe God at all times? Is there not a time of paine and miſerie, in which *Jobs* Wife perſwaded him to curſe God and dye? and can curſing of God, ſtand with bleſſing of God? O my ſoule, I take not my meaſure of bleſſing God from the laſt of that wicked Woman; it is not paine, it is not miſerie, it is not extremitie of paine, or miſerie, that ſhall make mee to breake my Vow in bleſſing of God: but if it be thought ſo great a matter to bleſſe God in miſery; I will ſtretch my Vow yet further, for I will bleſſe him for miſerie: and I may truly *Verſe* 1.

truly say, if it were not for paine, and misery; I should want one speciall Motive for blessing of God.

But yet there is a time of sleepe, which is a tribute due to Nature; and is it possible to pay the tribute of sleepe to Nature, and the tribute of blessing to God, both at once? If then sleepe be of necessitie so oftentimes, how can blessing of God be performed at all times? O my soule, when our waking is terminated with blessing of God; that blessing is in force till we wake againe: for as in what place the tree falleth, there it lyeth: so in what state the Soule goes to rest, in that state it resteth: If my soule say to God; I will lay mee downe to sleepe, for it is Thou, Lord, onely that sustaineſt me; my soule shall have it returned from God; Thus the Lord giveth his beloved sleepe.

But if thus perhaps be made good the continuance of Blessing God: yet in what consists the worke of blessing him? Is it onely in Thought, or onely in a good intention? No my soule; *his praise shall continually bee in my mouth*: for though the heart indeed bee the Fountaine of blessing him: yet out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh; and therefore it shall not be cloystered up in the Cells of silence, but it shall have vent, and bee brought into the light; that if it bee not said, that men seeing my good workes, it may at least be said, that men hearing my good words,

may

may glorifie our Father which is in Heaven. But doe I not by this fall againe upon my old difficultie? for if it seemed impossible before to blesse God at all times, may it not justly seeme as impossible now, that his Praise should continually be in my mouth? It may perhaps be true of the Angels, in whose mouthes wee know of nothing there is continually, but Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabbath: but to be verefied of the mouthes of men, seemes a thing impossible; for is there not a necessitie of speaking many things, besides Gods praises? yet nothing must bee spoken, but either his Praise, or to his praise, or else wee breake our Vow. And how then is this Riddle to bee expounded? Is it not as Saint *Paul* expounds it: *Whither yee eat, or drinke, or whatsoever yee doe else; let all be done to the praise, and glory of God.* And if all wee doe, may bee done to the praise of God, then certainly all we speake, may bee spoken to the praise of God: and indeed, seeing he never ceaseth to send forth continually his blessings; with what reason can we cease to set forth continually his Praises?

But when I make this Vow to blesse God at all times; I make it not presuming upon any abilitie in my selfe: Alas! I know my owne weakenesse, and how unready I am to any goodnesse; *but my soule maketh her boast in the Lord:* *Verse 2.* My confidence is, that he who hath given mee the resolution to will it, will give mee also the

power to performe it; that Hee who hath begun the worke, will also finish it, and being so good an Architect, as he is, will not lay a foundation, but will as well also set on the Roofe. If I should boast in my selfe, I should doe wrong to God: but if I boast not in God, I doe wrong to my selfe: seeing God is a strength to none, but to them that make him their strength, and none make him their strength, but they that make their boast of him. It is a hard matter to bring Boasting, and Humilitie, to meet together in one subject, betweene which there is so naturall an Antipathie: yet here it is done: for this I may say is the humble boasting, where a vaine man may glory without vaine-glory, where a weake Agent may presume without presumption: Not like the boasting of the Pharisee, so hatefull in the eyes of God, so offensive in the eares of the humble: For the *Humble can heare this boasting, and bee glad*, which they would never doe, if it were not conformable to the rules of Humility. Can any boasting be greater then to say; *I can doe all things?* yet in this boasting, there is humilitie, when I adde; *In him that comforteth mee.* For though God like not of boasting; yet he likes of this boasting, which arrogates nothing to our selves, but ascribes all to him: and seeing my soule boasteth her selfe of God, I doubt not, but as the humble heare it, and bee glad; so God sees it, and is pleased, and accepts

my

my Boasting as a sacrifice of Humilitie.

But to what end is it that my Boasting tends? Is it to set forth my owne worthinesse, and to vaunt of my abilities? Is it to tread in the steps of *Lucifer*, or to walke in the way of the Pharisee? God forbid, the humble then would not be glad to heare my boasting: No my soule, it is to magnifie the Lord; *O therefore magnifie the Lord with mee; and let us exalt his Name together*: for alas what am I to magnifie his Name my selfe alone, if I have not company to helpe me? All I can doe, and all the humble can doe, is but to say; Not unto us, *Not unto us, O Lord, but to thy Name give the glory*; which is rather a vilifying of our selves, then a magnifying of him: they must be creatures of a better mettall that can serve, and yet cannot serve to magnifie him as they should: and it is not the worke of a few: all the Millions of millions, in Heaven, and Earth, have enough to doe, and more then enough, to exalt his Name: O therefore, yee Blessed Spirits of heaven, doe you magnifie the Lord, but take mee with you in your company, that though I adde nothing to the weight of the worke, yet I may adde one to the number of the worke-men in magnifying his Name. We that are dwellers on the Earth, can exalt his Name no higher then the Heavens, and there you that be Inhabitants of Heaven must take it, and exalt it higher, and so betweene us all, wee *Verse 3.*

wee shall make a shift to exalt him to his true Elevation, for his Glory is above the Heavens. But if perhaps you thinke scorne of our company, as being men of polluted lips, and therefore not worthy to bee of your Consort; yet the humble will make a consort by themselves, and will not, indeed cannot be kept from exalting his Name: for our Humilitie, is his Exaltation; and then wee raise him up to the height of his Throne, when we cast our selves downe, as low as his Footstoole: that it is but a diverse expressing of the same thing in substance, whither we say; Let us exalt the Name of the Lord; Or let us fall downe, and kneele, before the Lord our Maker.

David is not wont to use Exclamations, but upon speciall occasion: if he use one here, and say; O magnifie the Lord; we may know that to magnifie his Name, is a thing of great importance: indeed so great, that all things besides it, at least all things without it, are nothing but vanitie. O then all you that be exalted in Heaven, and all you that bee humble in the earth; and lest any be left out where all are too few; O all ye workes of the Lord; blesse yee the Lord; Praise him, and magnifie him for ever. *For I sought the Lord, and he heard me; and delivered mee from all my feares:* To seeke, and upon seeking to be heard, is a great favour: but to bee heard, and upon hearing to bee delivered from all feares, is a favour that deserves

Verse 4.

Magnifying

Magnifying in the higheſt degree.

But why is it that I ſought him? is it not becauſe I had loſt him before? and why ſhould I ſeeke to get him againe, and would not keepe him, when I had him? O my ſoule, *Carendo magis quam fruendo*; Wee know the goodneſſe of things, more by wanting them, then by enjoying them, though I could not ſee what happineſſe it was to have him; yet I ſee what miſerie it is to want him: and yet in this I account my ſelfe happy, that I have ſought him while he was within hearing: for alas, if I had ſtayed from ſeeking him, till hee had beene out of hearing; What hope could I have had, of ever recovering him?

But O the tender mercies of God, that hath not ſuffered me to put off, my ſeeking him ſo long: for, O my ſoule, it is no leſſe his mercie that I ſeeke him, then that hee heares me; my deſire is not more to have him, then his to bee had; for how elſe could he have heard mee as ſoone as I ſought him, but that hee ſtood liſtening, as it were, when I would ſeeke him? and he heard me not as one that were indifferent whither he head me or no; but he gave me audience with no leſſe Intention to grant my ſuit, then attention to know it; for heare the ſucceſſe of my ſeeking him; ſee the fruit of his hearing me; *He delivered mee from all my feares*; To have delivered mee from all my troubles, had beene a great favour; but a farre greater, to

deliver me from all my feares, for where that, would have but freed me from present evill; This secures me from evill to come; that now I enjoy not onely Tranquilitie, but securitie: a priviledge onely of the godly: The wicked may be free from trouble, but can they be free from feare? No, God knowes, though they be not in trouble like other men, yet they live in more feare then other men; Guiltinesse of mind, or mind of the world never suffers them to be secure; though they bee free sometimes from the fit of an Ague, yet they are never without a grudging: and (if I may use the expression of Poets) though they feele not alwayes the Whippe of *Tysiphone*, yet they feele alwayes her terrours; and seeing the Lord hath done this for me, hath delivered me from all my feares; have I not cause, just cause to magnifie him, and exalt his Name?

But is Gods mercy confined onely to mee, and not extended as well to others? Yes, my soule, *Deus omnibus idem*, God is good to all: his mercy is over all his workes; Not onely over them, as being above them all; but over them as extended to them all: for other as well as I, *Looked unto him, and were lightened.* But should it not bee rather said; God looked to them, and they were lightened, then to say; They looked to God, and were lightened? For God is Light, and when the Light lookes to us, we are sure to be lightened: but wee that

Verse 5.

are

are darkneſſe may looke to the Light, and yet continue in darkneſſe ſtill? but is it not, that the influence of Gods favour deſcends upon the godly in a kind of correſpondence to their ſervice: if they cry, they ſhall be heard: if they mourne, they ſhall be comforted; if they humble themſelves, they ſhall be exalted; ſo here, becauſe they looked to God, they were lightened. Indeed Light is the proper inheritance of the godly, as being the children of light; which though they cannot deſerve, yet they may expect; and have they not reaſon then to looke to him, in whom it is, and from whom it muſt come? They little deſerve to be lightened, that will not looke to him that is their light: If it may be had for a looke, and they will not doe that; they worthily deſerve to be kept in darkneſſe. It is true, all would be lightened, but all take not the right courſe; they looke not the right way: There are ſome that looke to the ſtarres to bee lightened, becauſe the ſtarres indeed are glorious bodyes, and give light to the world; and theſe are ſuch as attribute all to Chance, and Fortune: and there are ſome, and theſe the worſt ſome, that looke to *Lucifer* to be lightened, becauſe they thinke he beares not his name for nought; and theſe are ſuch as light them Candles of impietie, and by impietie: but theſe are deluſions, and impoſtures: the way to bee truly lightened indeed, is to looke to God: for hee is the Father

of Lights: and as there is nothing with him; so there comes nothing from him, but onely Light. O then, my soule, looke to God, and he will lighten thee; looke to him with the eye of Faith, and the light of his Countenance shall shine upon thee.

But though the children of the world bee wiser in their Generation, then the children of Light; yet in this, the godly are the wiser: *for they looked to God, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed:* But may wee not say then, the more shame for them? for is it not true which is said, that nothing belongs to us, but confusion, and shame of face? may we not be ashamed to shew our faces to God, being so foule, and filthy as they are, seeing hee endures nothing that is uncleane? O my soule, as they that looked to the Brazen Serpent were presently healed; so they that looke to God, are presently lightened: for though looking to the materiall Sunne, bee a cause to staine, and tanne the face: yet looking to the Sunne of Righteousnesse is a meanes to cleanse it, and make it amiable: and why then should they be ashamed? Is it any shame to shew our sores to our Physitian? or any shame to shew our faults to our Confessour? No more is it any shame to shew our faces to God, though never so foule, and so full of staynes, seeing hee is the true Physitian that onely can cure us; Hee the true Confessour that onely can absolve us.

But

But who are they that were lightened? Perhaps *Pauci quos æquus amavit*: some few that were in his favour; perhaps rich men that could offer him Hecatombes, and plentifull sacrifices: No my soule; *The poore man cryed, and hee heard him: and saved him out of all his troubles*: for God is no accepter of persons; Hee neither regards the legges of the strong, nor the faces of the beautifull, nor the wealth of the rich; but whosoever they be that looke to him, and feare him, they are sure to taste of his mercy and goodnesse. *Verse 6.*

But though the poore man cryed, are wee sure he cryed to God? hee might cry out of sense of his misery; and what were this to move God to heare? O my soule, any crying of the godly, is a Musick with which God is pleased, or at least is moved: if it bee a crying out of sense of miserie, God is moved with it in his mercy, if a crying out of Devotion; God is pleased with it in his Justice. O then my soule, rather never cry, then not cry to God: for by crying to him, thou getteſt, I may say, two strings to thy bow: both his Mercie, and his Justice: and were it not folly to leave out one, where thou mayst have both? But though wee know not what the poore mans crying was, yet wee see what Gods hearing was: for hearing him, hee saved him from all his troubles: and who would not cry, to be so heard? The world may thinke it a strange

courſe in the poore man, to cry to God to deliver him from his troubles, being ſo farre off from him: but how farre was hee from him, when he heard him? If hee were ſo neere to him, that he might heare him, hee could not be ſo farre from him, but he might helpe him. O my ſoule, let the world thinke their pleaſure; let them ſtudie, and plot, and caſt about how to bring their purpoſes to paſſe; Doe thou cry to God to deliver thee from thy troubles; for if thou cry, thou mayſt be ſure hee will heare thee; and if he heare, thou needſt not doubt but he will helpe thee. But yet miſtake not the meaning, when it is ſayd, that God ſaved him from all his troubles; as though, becauſe hee was a poore man, that therefore hee was preſently made rich: Or if he were in paine, that he had preſently eaſe: for God goes not alwayes the ordinary way of Phyſicians, to cure cold Diſeaſes with hot Medicines; his wayes of deliverance are often-times ſpirituall; and ſo *Job* might be ſaid to bee delivered from all his troubles, when God gave him patience to endure his troubles; but ſpecially *Lazarus* might be ſaid to bee delivered from his troubles, when he was carryed by Angels into *Abrahams* boſome.

Verſe 7. And here it falls out fitly to mention Angels; *for the Angell of the Lord encampeth round about them that feare him, and delivereth them.* Wee little thinke we have a continuall guard about

about us, and leſſe we thinke that wee have a whole Campe for our guard; but leaſt of all, that it is a Campe of Angels: oh how ſafe ſhould we thinke our ſelves, if this were ſo! O my ſoule, this is ſo, and yet wee thinke our ſelves not ſafe enough: and may it not then be juſtly ſaid; *What doubt yee of, O yee of little faith?* But how can wee thinke there be Angells to guard us; when we ſcarce thinke there be any Angels? for if there bee, they muſt bee creatures of God: and then certainly creatures of a moſt excellent nature: and would *Moſes* then have left them out, in his Catalogue of Creatures, where he reckons them all up? Indeed for this very reaſon, becauſe they are Creatures of a moſt excellent Nature, hath *Moſes* left them out: for hee ſpeakes but of materiall Creatures, in this materiall world; of which number, the Angels are none. But wee may thinke perhaps there are none, becauſe wee can ſee none: as though we could ſee a thing that is inviſible? ſhall we therefore thinke we have no ſoules, becauſe we cannot ſee our ſoules? Wee live now by Faith, and not by ſight, and therefore can neither ſee ſoules nor Angels; we ſhall then ſee both, when we ſhall live by ſight, and not by Faith. Alas! if we beleeve no more then we ſee, we ſeeme not to live by Faith neither, for Faith beleeves that which it cannot ſee: Oh therefore my ſoule, to make it appeare thou liveſt, and that thou liveſt by Faith; let this be an

Article

Article of thy Creed, that the Angels encampe and pitch their Tents about thee: that if at any time thou bee assaulted, if assaulted by enemies, if by an Army of enemies, thou maist have recourse to the confidence of this Guard, and never tremble for any Alarum: seeing there are more with us, then are against us.

But how can the godly thinke they have a Guard about them, when it is for Princes onely to have a Guard, and the godly for the most part are but private men? O my soule, this is a Guard that attends no lesse the poorest man, then the greatest Prince, and attends him with as much carefulnesse, as if he were a Prince.

But if there be Angels to defend the godly, why doe they not defend them? why doe they suffer them to be so molested, so afflicted as they are? for who are in such troubles, who groane under such afflictions as the godly? and would this be so, if that were so? would they be so oppressed, if they had Angels to relieve them? O my soule, thou little considerest the infinite benefits that the godly receive by the ministerie of Angels. If perhaps they suffer troubles of the body, doe they not escape farre greater of the soule? If they endure perhaps some momentarie afflictions, doe they not avoid afflictions that would be everlasting? Is there not an Army of malignant spirits to assault them, and could they be safe from tearing in peeces; if there were not a

campe

campe of Angels to assist them? But though the Angels be a guard to the whole man, both body and soule; yet being creatures spirituall and invisible; they are chiefly a guard to the invisible and spirituall part, which is the soule. The body they know must goe to the earth, and therefore though a part, is the least part of their care: It is the Soule they chiefly waite upon, because it is the soule they chiefly waite for: for they stand waiting for the soule, when it shall leave the body, that they may take it, and carry it into *Abrahams* bosome: for till then they breake not up their Campe.

And now, O my soule, seeing the Angels are so beneficiall, and so good unto us; *Oh taste, and see how good the Lord is:* for by the goodnesse we find in the Angels, we may take a taste of the goodnesse that is in God: if it be a great goodnesse in the Angels to encampe about us: how great is his goodnesse that gives it them in charge? for the Angels would not doe it, if God did not command them: Alas! they could not doe it, if God did not enable them. *Oh then, taste and see, how good the Lord is*; Not how good the Angels are, though they bee good, and exceeding good in their kind, as Ministers: yet what is this to the goodnesse of God, who is the Fountaine of goodnesse to the Angels themselves? *Verse* 8.

O then, *Taste, and see how good the Lord is:* for taste him we may, but we can but taste him

while we live here, wee shall not have a full comprehension of him, till wee come to see, as we are seene, when wee shall need no more encamping of Angels round about us.

O then, *Taste and see how good the Lord is*; but how can wee taste him that is not bodily? how see him that is not visible? Not him indeed, but his goodnesse: and not his goodnesse, neither in its selfe, but in its effects; and not in its effects neither, as they shall be, but as they are, which God knowes, is but a small part of that they shall be.

O then, *Taste, and see how good the Lord is*: if you would but taste him, you would never take pleasure in other meat: if you would but see him, you would never delight in other object. O my soule, if thou couldst but taste the sweetnesse, if but see the goodnesse that is in God, it would make thee fall into a greater extasie, than that of Saint *Peter* at the sight of Christs glory in the Mount: at least it would weane thee from all the pleasures, that the taste, or the sight, can minister to thee in this vaine world; for alas, what are the pleasures of the taste, to the sweetnesse that is in God, but as bitter Aloes, to the sweetest honey? What are the delights that passe by the senses, to the delight in God, that passeth all understanding? May I not justly say now: *Blessed is the man that trusteth in him*: for hee that trusteth in God, and he onely, is like to bee admitted to taste

taſte the ſweetneſſe, and to ſee the goodnaſſe that is in God: which onely are the things that can make us bleſſed. What is it to truſt in God, but to depend wholly upon him, and to put all our confidence in him? To truſt in the world, is to leane upon a broken reede; to truſt in our ſelves, is to leane upon a ſhadow; onely to truſt in God, is the true *Terra firma*, where the Angels pitch their Tents; and where if wee fixe our ſelves, the gates of Hell can never prevaile againſt us. What preſerved *Jonas* in the Whales belly? What, *Daniel* in the Lyons denne; but only their truſt in God? O then my ſoule, doe thou alſo truſt in God, and hee will be the ſame God to thee, the ſame ſafegard in thy dangers, as he was to *Jonas* and to *Daniel*. But yet let thy truſting in him be ſuch as that thou preſume not: for there are certaine bounds that muſt not be paſſed: It is as dangerous to goe too farre in truſting in him, as to be too ſhort: and as it is Faith, that puts us on for comming too ſhort, ſo it is Feare that keepes us off from going too farre: O therefore *Feare the Lord yee his ſaints; for there is no want to them that feare him.* Verse 10. Verely a ſtrong Motive to make us feare God; ſeeing hee that feares him ſhall want nothing. And yet the Motive not ſo ſtrong, but the reaſon as apparant, for the Feare of the Lord is the beginning of wiſedome; and Wiſedome I may ſay is the godly mans Purviour: and what marvell then if hee

want nothing that hath ſo cunning a Purveiour as Wiſedome, to keepe him from want: but then it muſt be from want of things that are good: for to want other things, is no diſparagement to Wiſedomes pourveyance. O that men would underſtand how to diſtinguiſh betweene things that are truly good indeed, and things that but onely ſeeme good! we ſhould then have a better world then wee have, and men would never complaine of want, when they have but too much: never bee ſo earneſt for ſupply of things, that truly conſidered, are but meerely ſuperfluous. If therefore one that feares God be in any want, we may know that the thing he wants is not good: for if it were good, he ſhould not want it: it may perhaps be good in it ſelfe, but not good for him, and if not good for him, hee cannot be truly ſaid to want it, becauſe indeed he were better be without it.

But is Feare a thing of ſuch force to ſupply our wants? One would rather thinke that boldneſſe and courage ſhould ſupply them: No my ſoule, for what creature ſo couragious as the Lyon? *Yet the young lyons doe lacke, and ſuffer hunger*: whether they be young Lyons as depending upon the proviſion of their Parents; or young in the ſtrength of their youth, that can provide for themſelves; yet they ſometimes lacke and ſuffer hunger: for indeed ſtrength of body, is not the beſt Purveiour: No my

Verſe 11.

my soule, nothing but wisedome makes the true purveyance, and no wisedome without the feare of the Lord; and therefore none but they that feare the Lord can bee free from want.

But is not this a fearefull doctrine, that either wee must feare, or else wee must want? were it not as good to want, as to have our wants supplyed by feare? Is not the Remedie worse then the Disease? Alas! this is but the objection of Children; either Children in yeares, or Children in understanding, who know not what Feare it is I meane: and therefore *Come yee children, and hearken to mee: I will teach you the feare of the Lord:* It is not a Feare, that you need be afraid of; it is a feare, that will free you from all other feares; it is a feare that is Active; where all other feares are Passive: It is a Feare that workes in love, and who would not love such a Feare? It is a Feare that is joyned with Joy: a Feare, not to offend: but a Joy, for not offending: It is a Feare, not so much of Gods justice, as of his Mercy: for there is mercy with him that hee may bee feared: It is not a Feare that will shorten your life, but be a meanes to prolong it: but then it must not be a bare speculative feare, but you must put it in practise: and these may bee the rules: *Keepe thy tongue from evill, and thy lippes from speaking guile: Depart from evill, and do good: seeke peace, and pursue it.* Long life was once

Verse 11.

Verse 12.

promiſed before, to them that honour their Parents; and here it is promiſed againe to them that love their Neighbours; for theſe Rules are as the whole body of morall Philoſophie, and are therefore delivered in ſixe parts, like the ſix Commandements of the ſecond Table; which onely concerne our dutie to Neighbours: and in all of them the qualitie of chiefe Predominance, and which keepes then all in tune, is Feare; *Keepe thy tongue from evill*, for feare of the evill that may enſue: *and thy lips from ſpeaking guile*, for feare leſt thy guile bee diſcovered to thy ſhame. *Depart from evill*; for feare of infecting: *and doe good*, for feare of repenting: *Seeke peace*, for feare of wanting it; *and purſue it*, for feare of loſing it. The two firſt Precepts are the dutie of words, for words muſt firſt be regulated, before workes can bee actuated; and they are both Negative; *Keepe thy tongue from evill: and thy lips from ſpeaking guile:* for it is not required of the tongue to be Eloquent; or of the lips to deliver Oracles: It is enough in the tongue, if it be not irreverent to ſuperiours, nor detracting from equalls: It is enough in the lips, if they be not charmes to deceive, nor Equivocations to delude.

The other Precepts are the dutie of workes, and they are foure; where the Precepts of words were but two; becauſe we muſt be more in workes, then in words: and they are all Affirmative: for it is againſt the nature of a worke, to

to be in the Negative: for so working should be no better then idlenesse: the two former are generall, as generall as Good and Evill; that if we meet with any thing that is Evill, our part is to Depart: for there is no demurring upon Evill; No dallying with baytes: lest staying, we be stayed, as *Eve* was: Therefore *depart from evill.* If we meet with any thing that is good; our worke is, to fall a working; for vertue consists in action, and is not so proper to bee talked of, as to be done: we never reade of any reward for good words onely; but all reward is onely for good workes: *Because thou hast done this*; saith God to *Abraham*: Therefore *doe good.* The two last Precepts are speciall; whither we call them speciall, as being particular, or as being excellent, for so is Peace: It is the legacie that was left us by Christ: and who would lose Christs Legacie, for want of seeking it? Therefore *seeke Peace, and pursue it*: but not pursue Peace, for this were to make warre upon peace, but pursue the seeking of Peace: for though it be said; *seeke, and yee shall find*; yet it is not said how long we must seeke before wee shall find: if therefore seeking Peace, you find it not at first, pursue the seeking it, and you shall find it at last. Agree with thine Adversarie while thou art in the way; This is to seeke peace: Leave thine offering at the Altar, and goe first, and be reconciled: This is to pursue it. Or perhaps the counsell that Saint *Paul* gives

to

to *Timothy*, may expreſſe it plainer: Be inſtant in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon: to bee inſtant in ſeaſon, is to ſeeke peace: to be inſtant out of ſeaſon, is to purſue it. Indeed if a man deſire long life, and to ſee good dayes; he muſt have a ſpeciall care of peace: whither it be peace in the humours, or peace in the Paſſions; whither Peace with God, or peace with men: they are all prolongers of life; and life is never ſhortened or diſquieted, but for want of peace in one of theſe, and therefore that you may not bee to ſeeke of long life; *ſeeke peace, and purſue it.*

And now, O my ſoule, is there not great cauſe, that the feare of the Lord ſhould animate all our words and workes, when ſo great a Majeſtie, as the eye of God is looking upon them? when ſo ſacred an Auditorie, as the eares of God are hearkening to them? *Verſe 15.* *For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous; and his eares are open to their cry*; and can any man be ſo without ſhame, as to bee without feare, when he is the ſpectacle which God is pleaſed to looke upon? the ſpeaker which he vouchſafes to hearken to? But, O my ſoule, as it cannot but make thee feare, ſo it cannot but make thee joy; for what greater honour, then to bee the object of Gods eyes and eares? What though the world regard thee not, as long as God regards thee? What are the eyes and eares of the world, but eyes and eares of ſcorne, or elſe of envie: of ſcorne, when in adverſitie, and of envie

envie in prosperitie? but the eyes of the Lord, are righteous eyes, and are therefore upon the righteous: his eares, are eares of compassion, and therefore are open to their cry. But are not the Eyes of the Lord, as well upon the wicked? and what priviledge then is this to the Righteous? No my soule, his Eyes are upon the Righteous, but they are against the wicked; and not onely his eyes, but his whole *Face is against them, to cut off their remembrance from the earth:* O my soule, as thou considerest with joy, the great force that is in righteousnesse, which drawes the eyes, and opens the eares of God: so consider with trembling, the great force that is in sinne, which not onely turnes away his Eyes, and stops his Eares, but makes him to bend his whole Face in furie; that if his favours of looking upon us, and hearkening to us, cannot winne us to feare him out of love: at least the bending his Face against us in anger, may force us to feare him out of terrour: for he bends not his Face to make a shew onely, as though he did but set a face upon it; but it is to cut off the very remembrance of them that doe evill from the Earth. *Verse* 16.

But may not the wicked erect Tombes and Monuments, that will preserve their remembrance for many Ages: perhaps as long as the Earth shall endure? and how then is their remembrance cut off from the Earth? but from

what Earth? is it not meant from the Land of the living? that in this may be seene the different condition, betweene the godly and the wicked; for as it is said here, that the remembrance of the wicked shall be cut off from the Earth; so it is said in another place of the godly, that they shall be had in everlasting remembrance: and where is any everlasting remembrance to be had, but in the Land of the living? Indeed to have their remembrance cut off in this Earth, is not worthy of Gods threatning: It is the cutting off from the Land of the living, which is the blotting them out of the Booke of life; that is a worke worthy of Gods setting his Face against them, and this may well bee called a cutting off; not onely because it shall come suddenly upon them, but because they are never like to be heard; Alas! never like to be heard of any more, which can never be the condition of the godly, for they can never be so out of remembrance, but that they shall bee alwayes heard of God: *For the righteous cry; and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.*

Verse 17.

But how is it like to be true, that the godly shall never be forgotten, when they seeme to be forgotten already while they live? for how else should it happen, that they are more in trouble, in more trouble than other men, but that God hath cast them out of his remembrance? O my soule, their very being in trouble,

ble, is a certaine argument that God remembers them: if he had not remembred *Iob*, and his righteouſneſſe, he would never have given Sathan ſo much leave as he did to trouble him. For indeed, though troubles be judgements to the wicked; and are as the firſt blowes to cut off their remembrance from the earth, yet they are but tryals to the godly, and doe but ſerve to make their remembrance be the freſher. Doe we not ſee how Trees are nipt with froſt and cold, and not ſo much as a leafe left hanging upon them, ſcarce ſo much as life remaining in them? but is it not to renue in them the freſher ſpringing, and to make way for fruits in a greater plentie? and ſuch are the troubles of the godly, they end in deliverance; and though they be bitter for the preſent, yet they make the joyes afterward to taſte the ſweeter. And what marvell, if God heare the cry of the righteous, being ſo nigh unto them as hee is? *For the Lord is nigh unto them, that are of a broken heart:* Not broken with envie, as many are: Not broken with deſpaire, as ſome are; but broken with ſenſe of their ſinne, as the righteous are; for this onely is the broken heart, to which God is nigh: and hee is not nigh it, in vaine: No my ſoule, it is good having God to be our neighbour; for hee ſaves all them to whom he is nigh; *Hee ſaves all them that bee of a contrite, and humble heart:* the lower they are in their owne eyes, the higher they are in his:

Verſe 18.

and when their heart is broken with ſenſe of their ſinne, he makes it whole againe with ſupply of his grace. It is true; *Many are the afflictions of the righteous; but the Lord delivers them out of all.* For the righteous have many enemies, and therefore muſt needes have many troubles; but their troubles are not troubleſome, becauſe they have the Lord for their deliverer; if it be ſickneſſe, he makes their bed, in their ſickneſſe: If it be hunger, hee fills the hungrie with good things, when hee ſends the rich emptie away: if it be Death it ſelfe; *Domini, Domini ſunt exitus mortis*; the iſſues of Death are all in Gods hands: and all this while, though their heart be broken, yet their bones are whole ſtill: They may have thornes in the fleſh, but *not a bone of theirs is broken:* for one of their bones is Faith, which though it may bee ſhaken, yet it cannot bee broken: Another of their bones is Hope, which though it may bee battered, yet it cannot be broken: and Patience is a bone, which may be vexed, but can never be broken: for in all of them, the Lord hath a hand; Hee upholds the righteous, that they cannot fall: Hee ſtrengthens them that they cannot faint, and as long as their bones bee whole, they are able to ſtand upright, and ſhrinke not for any burthen, that either the Fleſh, or the World can lay upon them. And though *David* in this, have an eye perhaps upon Chriſt, of whom indeed there was not a

Verſe 19.

Verſe 20.

Bone

Bone broken; yet what is ſpoken of the Head, may not incongruouſly bee applyed to the Members: and in the ſoundneſſe of Chriſts bones, the bones of the godly are kept from breaking. But the troubles of the wicked are of another nature; for, *Evill ſhall ſlay the wicked; and they that hate the righteous ſhall be deſolate.* Their hearts perhaps are broken too, but becauſe they are not broken with ſenſe of their ſinne, but with ſpight and malice to the Righteous, there ſhall be none to make them whole, but their owne evill, ſhall be their owne deſtruction; and having none to deliver them, they ſhall be left deſolate, and without all hope of helpe. But ſhall not the wicked then have this good by being deſolate, that as they have none to helpe them, ſo they have none to hurt them? Alas! it needes not, they doe it faſt enough themſelves; for Sinne is a recoyling Poyſon; it turnes violently backe upon them that commit it: and it may be truly ſaid of every wicked man, that he is *Felo de ſe*, a Murtherer of himſelfe. Though Righteouſneſſe of it ſelfe, doth not ſave the Righteous, but they need a Saviour beſides; yet wickedneſſe of it ſelfe deſtroyes the wicked, they need no other Deſtroyer: *Perditio tua ex te, O Iſrael*; Thy deſtruſtion is from thy ſelfe, O Iſrael. *Verſe* 21.

And, O my ſoule, what great Examples there are to verefie this ſaying; *They that hate the righteous, ſhall be deſolate.* When *Cain* hated

the righteous *Abel*, was he not thereupon made desolate, and became a Vagabond, forsaken both of God and man? but in a higher degree; when the wicked Jewes hated Christ the righteous, was there not a Voyce heard as of Angels, saying; *Migremus hinc*: Let us depart from this place? and thereupon left them desolate, without Prince, or Prophet; without Temple, or Altar, to this day? You may say perhaps, that *Cain* might easily be made desolate, having killed his brother in a time, when there was no more in the whole world, but that one Familie: but how can the wicked bee made desolate now, when *Totus mundus in maligno est positus*; When all the world is full of them; and no Beasts so herd together as they doe? But is it not, that Desolateneſſe consists not so much in want of company, as in want of comfort: was *Job* the lesse desolate for having company, of whom to say; Miserable comforters are ye all? much lesse shal the wicked be the lesse desolate for having company of whom to say; Miserable Tormentours are yee all: for alas, all their companie, shall bee either Companions in their torments, or Companions their tormentours: which can never bee the case of the godly: for though they be not so perfect, not to have their faults, yet they are so happy, not to have them imputed: for being Gods servants, *Hee will redeeme them*: though they be taken captive, yet hee will not

suffer

ſuffer them to continue Captives: but rather then not redeeme them, he will give his onely Sonne to be their ranſome.

But yet how can the godly chooſe but bee Deſolate, when the whole world ſcarce affords enow to make a company? and where then can company be had to keepe them from being deſolate? O my ſoule, they have Angels to pitch their Tents about them, while they live here, and hereafter they ſhall come to bee Citizens in the *New Hieruſalem*, where they ſhall have company enough: Prieſts, and Patriarks; Prophets, and Apoſtles; Martyrs, and Confeſſours; bleſſed Virgins, and chiefly the Bleſſed Virgin; but above all, where they ſhall ſee the Bleſſed face of God; whoſe onely ſight is able; whoſe ſight is onely able to keepe from being deſolate: and then at leaſt I ſhall bee as able to performe my Vow, as now I am ready to make it: I will bleſſe the Lord at all times; his Praiſe ſhall continually be in my mouth.

THE

THE EIGHTIE FOVRTH PSALME OF DAVID.

1 HOw amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!

2 My soule longeth; yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord: My heart, and my flesh, cryeth out for the living God.

3 Yea, the Sparrow hath found an house; and the Swallow a nest for her selfe, where shee may lay her young: even thine Altars, O Lord of Hosts, my King, and my God.

4 Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praysing thee.

5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in

thee; and in whose heart are thy wayes.

6 Who passing thorow the valley of Baca, make it a Well: the raine also filleth the pooles.

7 They goe from strength, to strength; every one of them in Syon appeareth before God.

8 O Lord God of hosts, heare my prayer; Give eare, O God of Iacob.

9 Behold, O God, our shield; and looke upon the face of thine Anoynted.

10 For a day in thy Courts, is better then a thousand: I had rather be a doore keeper in the house of my God, then to dwell in the tents of wickednesse.

11 For the Lord God is a Sunne and a shield; The Lord will give grace and glory; No good thing will hee with-hold from them that walke uprightly.

12 O Lord of Hosts; Blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.

MEDI-

MEDITATIONS
VPON THE LXXXIV. PSALME OF *DAVID*.

WHen wee cannot expreſſe the greatneſſe of a thing in direct tearmes; wee are faine to flye to wonder, and ſo doth *David* here, becauſe he cannot expreſſe ſufficiently how amiable the Tabernacles of the Lord are; hee therefore falls to wondering, and helpes himſelfe with a queſtion: *How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hoſts?* But is not *Davids* wondering it ſelfe wonderfull, that the Tabernacles of the Lord of Hoſts ſhould be ſo wonderfully amiable? Is it not a wonder they ſhould bee amiable at all? For are not his Tabernacles, Tents of Warre? and is there any thing in Warre that can be amiable? If he had ſaid; How terrible are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hoſts; his wonder had beene with ſome congruitie: for *Verſe* 1.

the Lord of Hoſts is terrible in all his workes: but to ſay, How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hoſts; ſeeme to imply a contradiction: for though they may be amiable, as they are Tabernacles; yet they muſt needs bee terrible, as they are Tabernacles of the Lord of Hoſts: and when this Terribleneſſe hath made an abatement in their Amiableneſſe: What place will be left for wonder, to give cauſe to ſay; How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hoſts? But if hee had ſayd; How terrible are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hoſts; though it might have beene wonderfull in the degree, yet it could not bee wonderfull in the kind: for what wonder is it, if the Tabernacles of the Lord of Hoſts bee terrible? but when he ſaith; How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hoſts; this is not onely wonderfull in the degree; but in the kind, much more. For what can be more wonderfull, then that being Tabernacles of the Lord of Hoſts, they ſhould be amiable, and ſo amiable, as to be wondred at? But is it not, that God is in himſelfe ſo amiable, that all things of His, even his Terrours themſelves are amiable: his Tabernacles and his Tents; his Sword, and his Speare; his Darts, and his Arrowes; all amiable: Terrible no doubt to his Enemies; but amiable, wonderfull amiable to all that love and feare him: and great reaſon they ſhould be ſo; ſeeing they are all in their defence,

fence, and for their safeguard: though they be Tabernacles of the Lord of Hosts to the wicked, yet they are Courts of the Prince of peace to the godly: and this makes *my soule to long for the courts of the Lord.* For I desire indeed to be a Courtier, yet not as I am now; God knowes I am very unfit for it: but because Gods Courts are such, they make any one fit, that but comes into them: they receive not men fit, but make them fit; and he that was before, but a shrub in *Baca*; assoone as hee comes into the Courts of the Lord, is presently made a Cedar in *Lebanon*. *Verse* 2.

Indeed, if his Tabernacles bee so wonderfull amiable; they must needs be as wonderfull attractive, for there is no such Adamant as Amiableness: Nothing that so powerfully attracts, and drawes all hearts unto it. And to know the measure of their Amiableness, by the power of their Attracting, you need but looke upon my soule: For, *my soule longeth, and even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord:* which it would never doe, if it were not for their wonderfull amiableness, that attracts, and drawes it by a kind of violence, indeed by a kind violence unto them.

Every Amiableness is not so great to make a longing: Nor every longing so great, to make a fainting: Nor every fainting so great, to make the soule to faint: Oh then consider, how great this Amiableness is, which makes

my ſoule not onely to long, but to faint with longing? And blame me not for fainting, as though it were my owne fault, that would not reſtraine my longing: for ſeeing his Tabernacles are of infinite amiableneſſe, they muſt needs worke in me an infinite delighting; and that delighting, an infinite longing: and what reſtraint can there be of that which is infinite? No alas, my fainting is but anſwerable to my longing, and my longing but anſwerable to the Amiableneſſe: If I had the offer made me, which was made to Chriſt, to enjoy all the Kingdomes of the Earth, but with condition to want the Courts of the Lord; this want would bring to my ſoule a greater griefe, then that enjoying, would give it contentment: for ſeeing his Tabernacles are ſo amiable, where he is Lord of Hoſts; how amiable muſt they needs be, where hee is Prince of Peace? and Prince of Peace he is in his Courts, though in his Campe he be Lord of Hoſts.

And that you may know it is not the weakneſſe of my ſoule, that it faints with longing: (for indeed weake ſpirits are apt to faint upon every light occaſion) but that it is the very operation of the wonderfull attractive power, that is in the amiableneſſe of his Courts: ſee my Heart, and my Fleſh alſo, how they are drawne to long after the Lord, which they would never doe, if it were not for ſome wonderfull amiableneſſe that is in him: for you may

may well thinke, it muſt bee an Adamant of a wonderfull attractive power, that can draw theſe heavy Irons of my heart, and my fleſh unto it: for indeed, though my Soule have a longing for the Courts of the Lord, yet my Body perhaps could be content to want them; there are Courts in the world, that might pleaſe my Body as well; perhaps better then theſe, but God forbid: God forbid I ſhould be one, to have my ſoule and body divided while they are united, to have my ſoule runne one way, and my body another: No, I am none of thoſe; but aſſoone as my ſoule longed for the Courts of the Lord; *My heart, and my fleſh fell a longing for the living God:* As my Soule longed for the Place, ſo my heart, and my fleſh, for the Perſon: for my heart, and my fleſh, are of a duller apprehenſion; they muſt have a preſent Enjoying of that they long for, or they cannot be ſatisfied: but my ſoule is of a cleerer ſight, and knows if it can but come to the place where he is, it ſhall be ſure withall, to enjoy his preſence, and with his preſence, his Perſon. The Soule indeed is a ſpirituall ſubſtance, and therefore it is natural to the ſoule, to long after ſpirituall things; but the fleſh is an earthly ſubſtance, and therefore it is naturall to the fleſh, to long after earthly things: and as long as theſe two are linked in the Body together, they will alwayes be working upon one another, alwayes ſeeking to draw each other to their partie: and

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if the Soule can draw the fleſh, to goe her ſpirituall way, then all is well: it is as it ſhould be: but if the Fleſh draw the Soule to goe her earthly way, then all is out of order; there will be no longing for the Courts of the Lord, for they are ſpirituall, and are never longed for, but where the Soule is predominant, and hath the leading. And this is the order in *Davids* longing: firſt his Soule begins to long for the Courts of the Lord; and this is yet but a ſingle cord: but then comes in, the Heart, and the Fleſh too; and make it a Cord of three, that is impoſſible to bee broken. Indeed the Courts of the Lord are ſo exceeding amiable, that it is impoſſible, but every ſoule muſt needs long after them: but yet every ſoule conſiders not what belongs to this longing: but as *Balaam* longed to dye the death of the Righteous, yet was loath to live the life of the Righteous; ſo there are many that long for the Courts of the Lord, but are loath to live the life of ſuch Courtiers. They that be in Kings houſes, weare ſilke, and ſoft rayment, becauſe ſo it is fit for the honour of the place; and they that will be in the Courts of the Lord, muſt likewiſe weare rayment, that is fit for the holineſſe of the place: they muſt be cloathed with the ſoft rayment of meekneſſe, and humilitie; they muſt put on the robe of Righteouſneſſe, and the garment of Sinceritie; or becauſe they are Courts of the Lord of Hoſts: their cloathing

thing must rather be in Armour, as Saint *Paul* expresseth it; they must take the shield of Faith, the Helmet of Salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit; and if they come thus Cloathed, and thus Armed, they may justly then be said, to long for the Courts of the Lord: but if they weare not these garmens, their longing will prove but a false conception, and they shall heare it said: Friend, what makest thou here, without a Wedding garment?

If my God were, as the Gods of the Heathen, that have bodyes, but live not; that have eares, but heare not; my heart, and my flesh, would then never cry after him, that could not heare them: but now that he is a living God, and hath eares to heare; how can they now forbeare to cry after him, that cannot be without him? for alas, if hee should leave them, what would become of them? what would my heart be, but as a dead corps; and what would my flesh be, but as the Coffin?

Thou affordest, O Lord, thy meanest creatures, their places of rest and pleasure; *The Sparrow hath found an house, and the Swallow a nest for her selfe, where shee may lay her young*; and wilt thou not afford me to enjoy thine Altars, the onely places of rest and pleasure to my soule? Alas! O Lord, if thou wilt not afford me thine Altars, for places of pleasure; at least afford them to me for places of Devotion; that if I cannot make them a Nest for *Verse 3.*

my young ones, my humble Meditations, and my penitent submissions; at least I may offer upon them, the sacrifices of Prayer, of praise, and Thanks-giving.

I knew before by thy Courts, thou wert a King; and now I know by thine Alears, thou art a God; that confidently now I can say; *O Lord of Hosts, my King, and my God:* that if I feared thee before, as Lord of Hosts; I honour thee more now as my King; and adore thee more yet as my God; which as they are to thee, the tender of my dutifulnesse; so they are no lesse to me, the meanes of my blessednesse: *For blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they will still be praising thee.* Verse 4.

But alas, how happens this? There were Tabernacles before, as belonging to a Lord, and Courts, as belonging to a King; and Altars, as belonging to a God: and now to be but a House, as belonging to a private man? and so all this great Rising to end in a Fall? No, my soule, it is no Fall: it is an aggregation rather of all the other; for where his Tabernacles did but serve to shew his Power: his Courts but to shew his Majestie, his Alears, but to shew his Deitie; his House serves to shew them all: for in his House there will bee still praysing him: and his Praise and Glory is the summe of all. Or is it, that to dwell in Gods house, is a kind of appropriating him to our selves, seeing his Tabernacles, and his Courts lye open to strangers,

gers; his House, open to none but his servants: and seeing in the nerenesse to God, and conversing with him, consists all true blessednesse, therefore, Blessed are they that dwell in his House. But how dwell in it? Not to looke in sometimes, as we passe by, or to stay in it a time, as we doe at an Inne, but to be constant abiders in it day and night, as to which we have devoted our selves, and vowed our service.

But it may be doubted, when *David* saith, *Blessed are they that dwell in Gods house*: What Dwelling it is he meanes, whither dwelling in it, as Tenants, or as servants: for if as Tenants, it is like there is some Rent to be paid, and there is small blessednesse in paying of Rent: It would be a more blessed thing, if they could dwell in his House, and pay him no Rent. If as servants, it is like there is some worke to bee done, and there is small blessednesse in working: It would be a more blessed thing, if they could be his servants, and doe no worke, and how then comes any Blessednesse in, by dwelling in his House? Indeed take it either way, let them dwell in his House as tenants, or as servants, and they shall bee Blessed: let them have Rent to pay, as Tenants, let them have worke to doe, as servants, and yet they shall be blessed: and that which may seeme most strange, the Rent, and the Worke which seeme to hinder their blessednesse, is the very thing that makes them be blessed: for they are both

but one thing, both but praising of God; and praising of God is the onely thing, that whether they be Tenants, or Servants; whether Bond, or Free, will make them be Blessed.

And yet there is a Dwelling that hath not yet beene thought of; a Dwelling indeed that makes the true Blessednesse: and it is, to dwell in Gods house, neither as Tenants, nor yet as servants, but as sonnes: for neither Tenants nor Servants, abide in the house for ever, onely the Sonne abideth for ever: and therefore though the House of God seeme a meaner Title, then his Tabernacles, and his Courts; yet to us, it is the more comfortable title, seeing it makes us to be sonnes, which neither his Tabernacles, nor his Courts can doe.

But how appeares it to bee true, that they who dwell in Gods house, wil alwayes be praising him? seeing it is but seldome seene, that servants be so forward to praise their Masters? O my soule, it is not so much the good dispositions of the servants, as the infinite worthinesse of the Master, that makes them to praise him: for when they see the admirable Oeconomie of his Government, when they see how sweetly he disposeth all things in weight and measure, when they find him to use them more like children, then servants; what heart can bee so ungratefull as not to praise him? and seeing by dwelling in Gods House, they see these things continually; therefore they that dwell in his House,

Houſe, will alwayes bee praiſing him.

But is it not a ſtrange reaſon of Bleſſedneſſe, to ſay they are bleſſed, becauſe they are ſtill praiſing him? to be praiſed themſelves, might perhaps be ſome bleſſedneſſe: but what bleſſedneſſe can it be to praiſe another? Indeed if that other, were but ſuch another as our ſelves, it could be none: but when that other is ſuch, as that there is not ſuch another, or rather not another at all, to praiſe ſuch a one, certainly muſt needs bee bleſſedneſſe, or there can bee none; and ſuch a one is God: for alas what are we, but that in him wee live, and move, and have our Being; Hee onely is All in All. O my ſoule, if it were not for praiſing of God, there had never beene Created ſuch a thing as Prayſe: at leaſt we may juſtly ſay, that God, and Prayſe, are as truly Relatives, as any that are found in either Art, or Nature.

You may ſay then, It is like to bee an eaſie matter to be Bleſſed, if there goe no more to Bleſſedneſſe, but prayſing of God. Marke therefore how *David* ſpeakes; *They will be ſtill prayſing him.* It is not enough to praiſe him; it muſt bee a praiſing him ſtill, before it will make a Bleſſedneſſe, and though to praiſe God be an eaſie matter; yet to praiſe him ſtill, will be found a buſie worke; indeed to fleſh and bloud a miſerable worke; for if I be ſtill praiſing him, what time ſhall I have for any pleaſure? O my ſoule, if thou make it not thy.

pleasure, thy chiefe, thy onely pleasure to bee prayfing him; thou art not like in haſt to come to Bleſſednesse. And marvell not that *David* ſpeakes thus under the Law; When Saint *Paul* under the Goſpell ſaith as much: *Whether ye eat, or drinke, or whatſoever yee doe elſe; let all be done to the glory, and praiſe of God.* And indeed, how can I doubt of attaining to Bleſſednesse by praiſing of God; when it is praiſing of God, that makes the Angels in heaven Bleſſed? for the ſeeing of God, would never make them bleſſed, if ſeeing him, they did not praiſe him: and praiſing him would never make them bleſſed, if they did not praiſe him continually; crying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabbath: for as we praiſe God here on Earth, with ſaying, O Lord God of Hoſts; becauſe here, he fighteth for us againſt our enemies; ſo wee ſhall praiſe him in heaven with ſaying, O Lord God of Sabbath, becauſe there he will give us reſt from our enemies.

Verſe 5. But if it bee thought that praiſing of God will not be enough to make Bleſſednesse, or not to make Bleſſednesse enough; at leaſt, take this with it, and it will ſurely be enough: *Bleſſed is the man whoſe ſtrength is in God; and in whoſe heart his wayes are.* For though our praiſing of God, being our owne worke muſt needs be too weake to make a bleſſednesse; yet when our ſtrength is in God, this makes it his worke, and then our bleſſednesse hath a ſure foundation.

tion. When we trust to our owne strength for Blessednesse, we are often deceived, indeed as often as alwayes; but when our strength is in God, we may rest secure; our blessednesse is upon a Rocke, and cannot be shaken. But then Gods wayes must be in our hearts: for what way hath his strength to the heart, if his wayes be not in the heart: That's their place, if wee looke for strength from him. Are we not in a continuall fight against Sin; and have we any strength to fight, but onely in him? and will he take it well to be placed in a Wing? No my soule, he will strengthen us no longer then hee is placed in the heart of the Battell: That's his place, if wee looke to bee strengthened in him.

It is not enough that Gods wayes bee knowne, if they be not walked in; nor walked in, if not embraced: and it is not enough to embrace them with the armes, which is oftentimes feigned, and but onely complimentall; they must be embraced, with the two armes of the heart; Integritie, and Sinceritie: Integritie will embrace them all; Sinceritie will embrace no other. Though Gods wayes be many, yet they must all goe into one Heart; if any be left out, the rest will not tarry; though they must be in singlenesse of heart, yet they must not be single in the heart; They are fruites that grow in clusters, not one by one.

There are many that have Gods wayes in their

their mouthes, can talke holily, and make Sermons of godlineſſe, though they bee no Preachers; but becauſe they draw neere to God with their lips, and their hearts, are farre from him; they are like to have but the Phariſees entertainment, not ſo well juſtified as the Publican. There are many that have Gods wayes in their hands, they give almes plentifully, they diſtribute their bread to the Poore liberally; but becauſe their left hand knowes what their right hand doth; they have their reward already. They that have Gods wayes in their hearts, they onely are in the right way to bleſſednеſſe, and no rubbes of the world can turne them out of the way. For when Gods wayes are in the heart together, they lend aſſiſtance to one another; *Verſe 6.* *For paſſing thorow the Valley of Baca, they make it a Well; the raine alſo filleth the pooles,* That which ſeemed an impediment turnes to a furtherance; at leaſt, no miſery can be ſo great no eſtate ſo barren, but a godly heart can make it a Well; out of which to draw forth water of comfort; either water to clenſe, and make it a way to Repentance, or water to coole, and make it a way to Patience; or water to moyſten, and make it a way of growing in grace; and if the Well happen to bee dry, and afford no water from below; *yet the raine ſhall fill their pooles,* and ſupply them with water from above; If naturall forces bee not ſufficient; there ſhall bee ſupernaturall graces added to

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assist them: that though troubles of the world seeme rubs in the way to blessednesse: yet in truth they are none, they hinder not arriving at the marke we ayme at; they hinder us not from being made Members of Syon; they hinder us not from approaching the presence of God: No my soule, they are rather helpes; for by this meanes, *wee goe from strength to strength*; from strength of Patience, to strength of Hope; from strength of Hope, to strength of Faith; from strength of Faith, to strength of Vision; and then will be accomplished that which *David* speakes here; *Blessed is the man, whose strength is in God; and in whose heart his wayes are.*

If my strength were not in God, I should not dare to call upon him, being Lord of Hosts: but now that my strength is in him, and that I know hee is Lord of Hosts for me, and not against me: a Shield to me, a Sword onely to my enemies: now I have confidence to say: *O Lord God of Hosts, heare my prayer: give eare, O God of Jacob:* for as I doubt not but hee will heare me, though he bee Lord of Hosts: so I have much more confidenne, he will give eare unto me, being the God of *Jacob:* for he hath made a Covenant with *Jacob*, and with his posteritie for ever: that he will be their God, and they shall be his people: of which number, it is my happinesse that I am one; not after the flesh, which profiteth nothing, but according *Verse 7.*

ding to Faith, the onely thing that makes the true Iſraelite.

But yet what good will it doe me, that God heare my prayer, and give eare unto it, if he be ſtill averſe, and turne away his Face? O therefore, *Behold, O Lord, our ſhield, and looke upon the face of thine anoynted*: For I ſhall never come to looke upon thy Face, if thou vouchſafe not firſt, to looke upon mine: if thou afford me not as well the benefit of thine Eyes, to looke upon me, as the favour of thine Eares to heare me; I ſhall be left onely, to a bare expectation, but never come to the happineſſe of Fruition; but when thou vouchſafeſt to looke upon my face; that looke of thine, hath an influence of all true bleſſedneſſe, and makes me find what a happineſſe it is, to have the God of *Jacob* for my ſhield.

But it ſhould ſeeme that this Prayer belongs onely to *David*, or at leaſt to Kings, who like *David* are the Lords anoynted, and what is it then to us that are private perſons? It is true indeed, that Kings are the Lords anoynted in a ſpeciall manner: but yet every child of God is his anoynted too; for why elſe is it ſaid of Chriſt, that he was anoynted with the oyle of gladneſſe, above his fellowes; if it bee not that his fellowes, meaning the children of God, be anoynted too? Anoynted no doubt with the oyle of Grace; but to bee anoynted with the oyle of gladneſſe, is the very thing I pray for here:

here: the very thing, that makes mee long ſo much for the Courts of the Lord: *For one day in his courts, is better then a thouſand:* It is not ſo much the length of time, as the meaſure of joy that makes the bleſſednesſe: Or is it, that one day which ſhall never end; as the day is in Gods Courts, is better than a thouſand which have an end, as all the dayes of this world are. If he had ſaid, one day in his Courts, is as good as a thouſand; though this had beene a mighty odds, yet it had bin but a thouſand to one, there had at leaſt beene ſome proportion: but when he ſaith; One day in his Courts, is beter than a thouſand; this ſeemes to exceed all poſſibilitie of compariſon, and leaves no place for any proportion. Indeed one day in his Courts, gives ſeiſin of Eternitie, where a Thouſand that are ſpent any where elſe, are but ſteps of Mortalitie. If I be but one day in his Courts, I ſhall ſee that which will bee a joy unto mee, all the dayes of my life: where if I be a thouſand in any other Courts; I ſhall ſee nothing but vanitie, and vexation of ſpirit, that which will grieve me to thinke of, as often as I remember it. And as it is true in reſpect of Time; ſo it is no leſſe true in reſpect of Place: For, *I had rather be a doore-keeper in the houſe of my God, then to dwell in the tents of wickednesſe.* But is it ſuch a diſparagement to be a Doore-keeper? What was the Angell with the flaming Sword, but the Doore-keeper of Paradiſe? and is there *Verſe* 10.

not a conceit, that Saint *Peter* is the Doore-keeper of Heaven? Which though it be a vaine conceit, yet it may leade us to this congruous interpretation of *Davids* speech, to conceive as if he said, that hee had rather be Saint *Peter* in the house of God, then be *Annas*, or *Caiphas*, in the Court of *Herod*. Indeed in the sence that Christ is a Doore; *David* may well bee content to be a Doore-keeper: and though in Gods House, there bee many Mansions; yet seeing all of them are glorious, even the Doore-keepers place is not without its glory. But if you thinke the Office to be meane: consider then whose Officer hee is: for even a Doore-keeper is an officer in Gods house; and God never displaceth his Officers, unlesse it be to advance them to a higher: Where in the Courts of Princes, the greatest Officers are often-times displaced; turn'd off often with disgrace. However it be, it shewes not onely the great glory of Gods House, but the great humilitie of *Davids* heart; and that he is not of the ambitious humour of the Mother of *Zebedees* sonnes, whom no place would serve for her sonnes, but to have one of them sit at his Right hand, the other at his left. O gracious God, grant me but a Doore-keepers place in thy house, and I will never aspire after any higher roome: Not that I desire, to let in, and keepe out whom I please, but that I may thereby have liberty to walke in thy house, and to

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enjoy thy Preſence, in whoſe preſence is the fulneſſe of Joy for evermore. What are the Tents of wickedneſſe, but like Caves that have no light, and like Vineyards that have no Fences? and is there any compariſon to bee made betweene ſuch Tents; and the meaneſt place in the Houſe of God, where God not onely affordeth Light, but is Himſelfe the Light; Not onely is a Defendour, but the Defence it ſelfe? *For the Lord is a Sunne and ſhield; the Lord will give grace and glory.* I had heard before, that *In ſole poſuit Tabernaculum ſuum:* God hath placed his Tabernacle in the Sunne; But I never knew he was himſelfe a Sunne till now: but what Sunne? Not the Sunne that is but the child of light, but the Sunne who is the Father of Lights: Not the Sunne that was not, till three dayes after it was light; but the Sunne that was before ever any light was made; Not the Sunne which the Heathen commit Idolatrie in worſhipping; but the Sunne whom it is Idolatrie not to worſhip. Oh that the Heathen would all worſhip this Sunne: it ſhould not then be ſaid; *Plures adorant Solem orientem, quam occidentem:* That more worſhip the Sunne riſing, then ſetting: for this Sunne once Riſen, never ſets againe; once ſhining, is never any more Ecclipſed. Oh then vouchſafe, O God, if thou be a Sunne, to lighten my darkneſſe; if a ſhield, to protect my weakneſſe: if thou bee a Sunne, warme my

Verſe 11.

ſoule with the beames of Devotion; if a ſhield, defend my ſoule from the blowes of Temptation: if thou be a Sunne, O ſhine upon me, with the light of thy Countenance; if a Shield, O ſtand betweene me, and the aſſaults of Sathan; for alas, O Lord, I am darkneſſe, and weakneſſe, the Anvile of temptations, the very Butt of Sathan, if thou bee not a Sunne, and a Shield unto mee. O my ſoule, God will doe more then this; *Hee will give grace and glory*: Grace to be a Shield unto us, and Glory to be a Sunne unto us; Hee will give Grace to prevent us, and Glory to follow us: Grace, to walke uprightly; and Glory, if walking uprightly: Grace for a foundation to Glory, and Glory for a Crowne to Grace: and if theſe things bee not enough, hee will doe more yet: Doe thou but walke uprightly, and what good things ſoever there are in Gods gift, they ſhall all be given thee: for *No good thing will God with-hold from them that live uprightly.*

But how is this true, when God often-times with-holds Riches, and Honours, and health of body from men, though they walke never ſo uprightly? We may therefore know, that honours, and riches, and bodily ſtrength, are none of Gods good things: they are of the number of things indifferent, which God beſtowes promiſcuouſly upon the juſt, and unjuſt, as the raine to fall, and the Sunne to ſhine: The good things of God, are chiefly Peace of

conſcience,

conſcience, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt, in this life; Fruition of Gods Preſence, and Viſion of his bleſſed Face, in the next: and theſe good things God never beſtowes upon the wicked, never with-holds from the godly; and are all caſt up in one ſumme, where it is ſaid, *Beati mundo corde, quoniam ipſi videbunt Deum:* Bleſſed are the pure of Heart, (and ſuch are onely they that walke uprightly) for they ſhall ſee God. But is walking uprightly ſuch a matter with God, that it ſhould be ſo rewarded? Is it not more pleaſing to God to ſee us goe ſtooping, then walking upright; ſeeing ſtooping is the gate of Humilitie; then which, there is nothing to God more pleaſing? It is no doubt a hard matter, to ſtoope, and goe upright, both at once; yet both muſt be done, and both indeed are done, are done at once by every one that is godly; but when I ſay, they are done both at once, I meane not of the body: I know two ſuch poſtures in the Body both at once, are impoſſible: but the Soule can doe it, the Soule can ſtoope, and goe upright, both at once; for then doth the Soule walke upright before God, when it ſtoopes in humilitie before God and men.

And what remaines now for *David* to doe, but to bring in the concluſion upon the Premiſſes, ſeeing the Lord of Hoſts, though his Name be dreadfull, yet his Nature is lovely, ſeeing he is a Sunne to cheriſh, and a Shield to defend;

Defend; seeing he gives Grace and Glory, and with-holds no good thing from them that walke uprightly; Therefore blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

And what remaines now for us to doe, but to receive this Conclusion of *David*, as an absolute Demonstration: and thereupon to walke uprightly, and to put our whole trust and confidence in God, through the merits of his Son Christ Jesus; for then we are sure, wee are in a sure way, of attaining to Blessednesse, to Eternall blessednesse: that after this, we may leave our wondring, yet continue our Admiring; *How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord God of Hosts!*

THE

THE HVNDRED AND THIRD PSALME OF DAVID.

1 BLesse the Lord, O my soule; and all that is within me, blesse his holy Name.

2 Blesse the Lord, O my soule, and forget not all his benefits.

3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy infirmities.

4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving kindnesse, and tender mercies.

5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things;

and renueth thy youth like the Eagles.

6 The Lord executeth Righteousnesse, and Iudgement, for all that are oppressed.

7 Hee made knowne his wayes unto Moses, his Acts to the children of Israel.

8 The Lord is mercifull and gracious; slow to anger, and full of compassion.

9 Hee will not always chide; neither will hee keepe his anger for ever.

10 Hee hath not dealt with us after our sinnes; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

11 For as high as the heaven is above the earth; so great is his mercy toward them that feare him.

12 As farre as the East, is from the West; so farre hath hee removed our transgressions from us.

13 Like as a father pittieth his children; so the Lord pittieth them that feare him.

14 For he considereth whereof we are framed; he remembers that we are but dust.

15 As for man, his dayes are as grasse; as a flowre of the field, so he flourisheth.

16 For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more.

17 But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting,

ſting, to everlaſting, toward them that feare him, and his righteouſneſſe unto childrens children.

18 *To ſuch as keepe his Covenant; and remember his Commandements to doe them.*

19 *The Lord hath prepared his Throne in heaven; and his kingdome ruleth over all.*

20 *Bleſſe the Lord ye his Angels, that excell in ſtrength: that doe his Commandements; hearkening unto the voyce of his Word.*

21 *Bleſſe the Lord, all yee his Hoſts; Ye Miniſters of his, that doe his pleaſure.*

22 *Bleſſe the Lord all his workes, in all places of his Dominion: Bleſſe the Lord, O my ſoule.*

MEDITATIONS
VPON THE CIII. PSALME OF *DAVID*.

BLesse the Lord, O my Soule: O how well they are fitted! for what worke so fit for my Soule as this? Who so fit for this worke as my soule? My body, God knowes is grosse, and heavie, and very unfit for so sublime a worke; No my soule, it is Thou must doe it, and indeed what hast thou else to doe; it is the very worke for which thou wert made, and O that thou wert as fit to doe the worke, as the worke is fit for thee to to doe. But alas, I feare that by comming into this Body of earth, thou art become in a manner earthy, at least hast lost a great part of thy *Verse* 1.

abilities, and wilt never be able to goe thorow with this great worke thy selfe alone. If to Blesse the Lord, were no more but to say, Lord, Lord, like to them that cryed, The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord: then my tongue alone would bee sufficient for it, and I should not need to trouble any other about it: but to Blesse the Lord is an eminent worke, and requires not onely Many, but very able Agents to performe it; and therefore my Soule, when thou goest about it, goe not alone; but, *Take with thee, all that is within mee*; all the forces in my whole Magazine, whether it be my Heart, or my Spirits; whether my Will, or my Affections; whether my Understanding, or my Memory; take them all with thee, and Blesse the Lord.

Verse 2. And of them all, make use first of my Memorie: *Forget not all his Benefits*: for to remember his Benefits, is indeed a principall part of Blessing him. And the sooner thou goest about it, the better thou art likely to performe it: for forgetfulnesse is a thing, that growes soone upon us, and nothing sooner then forgetting of benefits: our Memories, are very apt to retaine Injuries, but very unapt for retaining of Benefits: For as long as we remember a Benefit, we seeme to stand upon the rack of an Obligation to requite it: and who is not willing to come off a Rack, by any meanes he can; and then rather by forgetting a Benefit, then by requiting it?

it? and perhaps wee thinke it a kind of payment, if we can but forget wee owe it. But O my Soule consider, that God expects no Retaliation of us; he lookes for no requiting at our hands; Alas! He knowes we are not able: He takes it in good part, if but onely we remember his Benefits; and should we not bee most ungratefull, they being so great, and so many as they are, if we should not afford him so much as the remembring them? But as to forget all his benefits, were a wonderfull forgetfulnesse; so to forget none at all, were as wonderfull a Memorie: for what memorie can be so vast, not to forget some, when they be so many? Indeed so many, that they cannot be numbred. And what then, O my Soule, wilt thou doe in this case? if thou canst not choose but forget some of his Benefits, yet forget not all his Benefits; if thou canst not remember all, at least remember some: Forget not, *It is hee that forgiveth all thy sinnes; it is hee that healeth all thy infirmities*: Remember but these, and they will alwayes minister matter enough to keepe thee in worke for blessing his Name. For, to forgive all my sinnes, O my grievous, my manifold sinnes, that I know not whether they bee more, or more grievous: whether their Number, or their Greatnesse be the greater; is it not a benefit that may justly claime a prime place in my memorie? If it were but onely to be favourable in punishing my sinnes; it were a benefit *Verse 3.*

nefit worth remembring; but to blot my sins cleane out, and absolutely to forgive them, and that freely, without any desert of mine; Alas, without any possibilitie of deserving; This is a Benefit that no Lethargie can forget, indeed a benefit that deserves remembring in the highest degree. And yet perhaps, to forgive all my sinnes, not a greater benefit, then to heale all my infirmities; (This being the chiefe worke of his Grace, as that of his Mercy) for seeing my sinnes, many of them, and upon the matter, all of them, bee sinnes of infirmitie: (for even wilfulnesse, and presumption, are of infirmitie) by healing my infirmities, hee prevents me of sinning: and is it not, as great a benefit, to keepe me from committing sinnes, as to forgiue my sinnes, when I have committed them? But, O my soule, meddle not with this high point of Heraldrie, to discusse, which is the greater of Gods Mercy, or his Grace: They are both an Abyssus: it is worke enough for thee, and for all that is within me, to Blesse him for both: and for both indeed thou hast just cause to Blesse him, seeing it is by the vertue of both, that thou art able to Blesse him. If it were not for his Mercy, thou wouldst want the materiall cause of blessing him, if it were not for his Grace, the efficient: but now that there is a concurrence of both together; Now that both he forgiveth all thy sinnes in his Mercy, and healeth all thy infirmities by his

his Grace; Now, O my ſoule, what would it argue but extream ungratefulneſſe, farre exceeding a forgetfulneſſe, both in thee, and all that is within me, if thou ſhouldſt not Bleſſe his Name? For, O my ſoule, conſider the multitude of infirmities, to which thou art ſubject; thou haſt many ſuggeſtions of the fleſh: and thou art apt to conſent, and yeeld unto them, and ſtriveſt not againſt them by earneſt Prayer, and holy Meditations; This is an infirmitie. In thy prayers to God; thy thoughts are often wandring, and thou thinkeſt of other matters, farre unworthy of that great Majeſtie to whom thou prayeſt: or if not ſo, yet thou art quickly weary, thy ſpirits are drowſie in it, and thou hadſt rather be doing of ſomething elſe: This is an infirmitie. And indeed thou haſt infirmities in all thy ſenſes. In thy ſeeing, thou canſt ſee a moate in thy brothers eye, and canſt not ſee a beame in thine owne eye. In thy ſmelling, thou thinkeſt *Suavis odor lucri ex re qualibet*; that the ſavour of gaine is ſweet from whence ſo ere it riſe. In thy Hearing; Thou art gladder to heare prophane, and idle diſcourſes, then ſuch as be ſerious, and holy: Theſe are infirmities: and, O my ſoule, if I ſhould cut thee up into as many parts, as an Anatomiſt, and examine the infirmities of every part; ſhould I not have cauſe, juſt cauſe to cry out with Saint *Paul*, O wretch that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of ſinne?

Who shall heale me of all these infirmities? for whether we call them sinnes, and then God forgives them; or call them Infirmities, and then he heales them: they are to us, all one benefit; in God, all one kindnesse; that as either of them is well worth remembring; so for both of them, we have just cause to blesse him, and to praise his Name.

But, O my soule, as thou remembrest these things; that both he forgiveth all thy sins, and healeth all thy infirmities: so remember also their consequences too; for upon these, there are great matters depending, as worthy to bee remembred, as the things themselves. For alas my soule, thou wert by sinne come to be Mortall; and the sentence of *Morte morieris*, was past upon thee: but now, by forgiving thy sinnes, this sentence is reversed: by healing thy infirmities, thy life is Redeemed; it is taken out of the hands of the Destroyer, and put into the hands of a Redeemer; and a Redeemer not onely from Captivitie, but from destruction: for Captivitie takes away but onely thy libertie, but destruction would take away thy very Being: and can it be thou shouldst not keepe that in memorie, which is it selfe the cause, that thou hast a Memorie? for what memorie couldst thou have, if thou hadst not a Being? and what Being couldst thou have, if thou wert destroyed? and destroyed thou shouldst be, if thou wert not Redeemed; and Redeemed

med thou canst not be, unlesse thy sinnes bee forgiven. This no doubt, is a consequence never to be forgotten; and yet perhaps there is a consequence behind, of greater consequence then this: For this (my soule) gives thy life but onely a duration; but there is a consequence a comming, that will give it an exaltation: For, *he crownes thee with loving kindnesse, and with tender mercies.* To be made a King, is an eminent favour: but to be made a King from being a Captive, where not onely the *Quo* is so considerable, but the *Unde* more; this is indeed a supereminent favour, and hardly capable of expressing. And this is thy case, for where before thou hadst fetters upon thy feet, thou hast now a Crowne upon thy head: and not a Crowne gotten by violence, and worne with feare: but *He crownes thee with loving kindnesse, and tender mercies.* His kindnesse would have made a Crowne good enough for thy wearing; but his loving kindnesse, makes it a Crowne worthy of his giving. And if there be doubt, that his mercies alone may not bee ready enough, to bestow this Crowne upon thee; yet of the readinesse of his tender mercies, there can be no doubt: there can indeed be no doubt, seeing his loving kindnesse, and his tender mercies, are the Crowne it selfe, which he bestowes. For, O my soule, when I speake of a Crowne, thou must not fancie to thy selfe, such a Crowne as Kings of the earth weare:

For Christ professed plainly, that his Kingdome is not of this world, and therefore neither must thine be: but consider the extent of Gods loving kindnesse, and of his tender mercies, and thou wilt find a better Crowne laid up for thee; then all the Kingdomes of the Earth put together, can afford. O gracious God, grant me the Crowne of thy loving kindnesse, and tender mercies; and all other Crownes I willingly lay downe at the foot of thy Throne, with the foure and twentie Elders: This onely is the Crowne to which my soule aspires, for onely this Crowne makes sinne, and Death to be my subjects; Rebellious sinne, that can never be brought into subjection, but onely by this Crowne, O God, of thy loving kindnesse, and tender mercies. These indeed are Consequences most worthy to be remembred, but yet perhaps not apt to be remembred, for are they not of too high a straine? and what the understanding doth not well apprehend, the memorie doth not easily retaine: He will therefore descend to Benefits of a lower ranke: *He satisfieth thy mouth with good things; and renues thy youth like the Eagles.* This no doubt is apt to be remembred, because it falls within the compasse of sense, for who is not sensible of good things, and specially when they bee good things for the mouth? for, *all the labour of man, is for the mouth*: All that the hands worke for, and all that the feet toyle about, is

Verse 5.

all

all but for the mouth: ſo long as we may have greene Paſtures, and ſtill Waters; ſo long as we may have meat and drinkes, not onely to ſatisfie hunger, but to pleaſe the palate, wee care not greatly for any thing elſe. But, O my ſoule, theſe are not the good things that are here meant; and yet even this perhaps were worth the caring for, if it might continue: but alas, the dayes will come, when I ſhall ſay, I have no pleaſure in them: the time will come, when my mouth will loſe its taſte; and what good then will theſe good things of the mouth doe me? No, my ſoule, no feare here of old age; no feare of defect by reaſon of yeares: For, *thy youth ſhall bee renewed like the Eagles*; There ſhall be no looſening here of the ſilver Cord, no breaking of the golden Bowle; but as the Eagle by mewing her feathers, renues her youth: So thou (my ſoule) by mewing thy feathers, which is by caſting off this fraile Tabernacle of thy fleſh, ſhalt perpetually be kept by the powerfull hand of God, in a ſtate of vigour. Indeed the life we live now, is the greateſt part no life; for Child-hood is ſcarce come to it, and Old age is almoſt paſt it; no time properly remaining to life, but onely the ſhort time of youth: but the life that God hath in ſtore for them that feare him; not onely ſhall be alwayes, but ſhall be alwayes Youth, and no defect of Age ſhall be able to take hold upon it.

But may we not now begin anew, and conceive rather, that when *David* calls upon his ſoule to bleſſe the Lord; *and not to forget all his benefits*: Hee meanes, he would have it to remember all his benefits; and therefore he preſently falls to reckon them all up himſelfe; not *ſingula generum*, but *genera ſingulorum*; Not all in particular, but the generall Heads, under which, all the Particulars are comprehended. And he begins *with forgiving of ſinnes*, becauſe this is the Foundation, this is that which reconciles us to God, and which makes us capable of all his other benefits. But alas, what good will his forgiving my ſinnes doe me, if he ſtay there, and goe no further? for ſhall I not be committing of new ſinnes continually; and ſo God ſhall bee alwayes forgiving, and never the neere? Never the neere, unleſſe hee be alwayes forgiving. To helpe this therefore, his next benefit, is the healing all my infirmities: for this takes away that aptneſſe to ſinne, to which wee are all of us by nature ſo prone and ſubject. But alas, what good will both theſe benefits doe me, if hee yet ſtay here, and goe no further? ſeeing I am now a captive, and already condemned to dye the death? for ſhould not my caſe bee like to theirs, who upon the ſcaffold aske the King forgiveneſſe, and when he forgives them, yet they are put to death nevertheleſſe. His next benefit therefore is a remedie for this: *For hee*

Verſe 4.

Redeemeth

Redeemeth thy life from destruction: Hee not onely frees thee from captivitie, but preserves thee from perishing. But alas, what good yet will all these doe me, if he should yet stay here, and goe no further? for when my sinnes be forgiven; when my infirmities healed; when my life redeemed; yet what am I more by all this, then as it were an *Abrasa tabula* at most, what have I more to take joy in, then every other ordinary creature? Hee will now therefore *Coronidem imponere*; give a benefit that shall perfect all: For, *Hee crownes thee with loving kindnesse, and tender mercies*; Whatsoever is within the compasse of his loving kindnesse; whatsoever within the extent of his tender Mercies; he will not onely make thee capable of it, but will freely bestow it all upon thee. And who can deny, but this now is a perfect Inventorie of all the benefits, for which the soule hath cause to blesse the Lord: to blesse him in respect of it selfe; though there are other benefits indeed to the body, for which the soule must blesse him too; for alas, the body is not able, not able of it selfe without the soule, and they are soone reckoned; for they may be reduced to these two; Sustentation, and Renovation: *For hee satisfieth thy mouth with good things; and thy youth is renewed like the Eagles*; as much as to say, Thou shalt have the happinesse of the Epicure, and of the Stoick both at once; at least, there shall bee no feare of hunger.

hunger and thirst: No drooping with Age, nor ruines of Time.

And now, O my soule, let not my being in trouble, and oppressed with sorrowes; make thee doubt of the truth of these things; for besides these benefits: *The Lord executeth Righteousnesse, and Judgement, for all that are oppressed:* Righteousnesse to them, and Judgement for them: For as it is righteous with God, that his servants who are here oppressed, should hereafter be comforted, and be made partakers of all these benefits: so it is his Judgement to the wicked, who are their oppressours, that they should feele hereafter, the full measure of Gods wratth, as it were in their revenge. And this Righteousnesse, and this Judgement, he not onely deliberateth, and determineth; hee not onely promiseth to the godly, and threatens to the wicked, and then leaves them undone: but he is perfect in all his wayes; hee is truly Reall, and puts them most assuredly in execution: at least, he executes them *Per se*, or *Per alium*: either by himselfe, or by his Angels: For indeed this part of his Judgement, which is inflicting of punishment, is not properly in God *Opus suum*: and therefore no marvell if hee leave it, to be done by Angels, as he did at *Sodome*: but though the Ministrie be theirs, yet the Execution is His: all the power is onely from him.

Verse 6.

And although the executing his Righteousnesse

neſſe, and his Judgement, be *inter Arcana ſua*; things hidden from us; at which we may ſtand amazed, but can never underſtand them: yet he hath often-times revealed them to his ſervants the Prophets, and ſpecially to his ſervant *Moſes*; *For he made knowne his wayes unto Moſes, his Acts to the children of Iſrael:* For when *Moſes* went up to the Mount Sinai, and tarried there with God, the ſpace of fourtie dayes; we may well thinke that God in that time, revealed many ſecrets to him: and particularly made knowne his wayes, not onely his wayes in which he would have us to walke; but his wayes in which hee walkes himſelfe: and the courſe he holds in the Oeconomie, and government of worldly affaires; why hee ſuffers the wicked to proſper, and why the godly to be oppreſſed. Theſe wayes of his, hee made knowne to *Moſes*; to the children of Iſrael, onely his Acts: Hee ſhewed them his Wonders upon *Pharaoh*, and that was his Judgement: and he ſhewed them his wonderfull favours to themſelves in the Wilderneſſe, and that was his righteouſneſſe; but hee ſhewed them not his way, and the courſe he held in them: They ſaw onely the Events of things, they ſaw not the reaſons of them, as *Moſes* did; no more doe we: nor is it fit we ſhould: It is enough for us, enough for our comfort, that we know this of God in generall; *That hee is mercifull and gracious, ſlow to anger, and full of compaſſion:* Not that any. *Verſe* 7. *Verſe* 8.

any slownesse is in God, but his slownesse is his Patience, and his Patience is out of compassion: for alas, if God were as ready to anger, as we are ready to provoke him to anger we had long ere this, been turned to dust, and utterly consumed.

O my soule, here are foure properties spoken of to be in God; and are all so necessary, that we could not misse one of them. If hee were not mercifull, we could hope for no pardon; and if he were no more but mercifull, we could hope for no more but pardon, but when besides his being mercifull, he is also gracious, this gives us a further hope, a hope of a Donative: and then it will not be, what we are worthy to receive, but what it is fit for him to give. If he were not slow to anger, we could expect no patience; and if he were but onely slow to anger, we could expect no more but patience; but when besides his slownesse to anger, hee is also full of compassion; This makes us expect, he will be the good Samaritane, and not onely bind up our wounds, but take care also for our further curing. What though he chide, and be angry for a time: It is but our being patient awhile with him, as he a long time hath beene patient with us: *For he will not bee alwayes chiding; neither will hee keepe his anger for ever:* No my soule, consider the rule of Nature; that *Nullum violentum est diuturnum*: and you will find it true in the God of Nature: Mercy, and Compassion, are kindly, and naturall in God,

Verse 9.

God, and therefore these will continue, and never leave him: but chiding, and anger, are things, I may say, violent, and not naturall in him; and therefore it cannot bee that these should last, or continue long with him. Certainly it is as unpleasing to God to chide, as it is to us to be chidden; and so little hee likes of Anger, that he riddes his hands of it as fast as he can: he is not so slow in comming to it, but he is as quick in getting from it: for chiding is a barre to Mercy, and Anger an impediment to Compassion: and nothing is so distastfull to God, as that any block should lye in the way of his Mercy, or that the libertie of his Compassion should have any cause of restraint: and then we may be sure, hee will not himselfe lay a block in the way with chiding, nor be a cause to restraine his Compassion, by keeping his Anger. And we may the better be perswaded of this, in that which is to come, by taking notice of that which is past: For, *Hee hath not dealt with us, after our sinnes; neither rewarded us, according to our iniquities.* Though he have chidden, yet hee hath not strucken: or if hee have strucken, yet his blowes have not beene great, nor so great to doe us any hurt, for there is mercy in his very Anger; and though we keep our selves within no bounds of sinning, yet he keepes his Anger within the bounds of Mercy. Alas! O Lord, if thou shouldst deale with me after my sinnes; as I have used no measure in *Verse* 10.

my sinning; so thou shouldst use no measure in my punishing, and what then could I expect to befall me, but utterly to perish?

But why is it that God hath not dealt with us after our sinnes? Is it not because hee hath dealt with another after our sinnes? Another who tooke our sinnes upon him: of whom it is said, that God *chastened him in his fierce wrath*: and why did he chasten him, but for our sinnes? O gracious God, Thou art too just to take revenge twice for the same faults: and therefore having turned thy fierce wrath upon him, Thou wilt not turne it upon us too: but having rewarded him according to our iniquities, thou wilt now reward us according to his Merits. O Deere Jesus, let not thy painfull sufferings bee made frustrate by my sinfull doings: but so mediate betweene God and my sinnes, that hee may turne away his angry Countenance from me, and looke upon me onely with the eye of his Mercy. And, O my soule, how canst thou doubt of this, when *As high as the Heaven is above the Earth; so great is his mercy towards them that feare him*: and who would wish for a greater mercy to bee in God, then this? But yet the distance betweene Earth and Heaven, though great, and indeed very admirable great, is but a limited distance: and is there then a limitation, and a boundary of Gods mercy? May I not as truly say, as low as Hell, is beneath the Earth; so great is my sinne in the

Verse 11.

the sight of God? and how then am I sure, that Gods mercy is any greater then my sins? and if not greater, how can it pardon them? O my soule, though the heighth of Heaven be limited, yet Gods mercy hath no limitation, for his Mercy is above all his Workes, and therefore above Heaven the worke of his hands. Or if hee seeme to set a limitation to Gods mercy, is it not perhaps, because there is some sinne that is not capable of his Mercy? for sinne against the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven, either in this world, or in the world to come. But, O my soule, though Gods mercy bee without limitation, yet let it not make thee the bolder to sinne: for though it be so great, yet it is so great to none, but to them that feare him: for to them that feare him not, it is not so great; Alas! it is not great at all: Alas! it will be none at all; but if thou feare him, and to feare him, is to feare to sinne: then thy sinne can never be so great, but that Gods mercy, which is as high as Heaven, will bring thee to bee admitted into the kingdome of Heaven.

But if you thinke this distance of height, from Earth to Heaven, not sufficiently to expresse the greatnesse of Gods mercy; then take the distance of length, from East to West: *For as farre as the East is from the West; so farre hath he removed our sinnes from us*: that if the East, and the West, can never come to meet *Verse* 12.

together; no more shall our sinnes bee ever able to come against us in the sight of God. But alas, this gives not so good satisfaction as the other: for though the distance from East to West, bee vast indeed to us; as to which our sight cannot reach, though wee should use all the Perspective glasses of the world: yet what is this to God, who can as easily see from East to West, as if they were hard by, and close together? But is it not that all Gods mercy to us, is onely in Christ: and may wee not then conceive, that these Distances are represented by the manner of Christs hanging upon the Crosse; where his Feet, and his Head, seeme to point from Earth to Heaven; and the stretching out his hands, seemes to point from East to West? But though Relation to Christ be not the ground of these expressions; yet it cannot be doubted, but that they sufficiently expresse the greatnesse of Gods mercy; seeing they are the greatest distances, that humane apprehension is capable to conceive.

But if you bee not satisfied with these expressings from Distances of place; then take an expressing from the affection of Nature:

Verse 13. *For as a Father pitieth his children; so the Lord pitieth them that feare him.* And now let any that is a Father, examine his owne Bowells, how much he pities his children, and then say; If Gods pitty to them that feare him, be not in a very high degree. Certainly if any Name, could

could expresse a greater pitty, then the name of a Father, Christ would never have taught us to use this Name in making our prayers. And who could be so fit to make this comparison as *David*, who gave a testimonie of it in himselfe, by making his moane; *O my sonne Absolom, my sonne, my sonne Absolom; would God I had dyed for thee; O Absolom, my sonne, my sonne:* that now it seemes, Gods pitty is matcht; and this example reacheth home, to expresse the greatnesse of Gods pitty to the full: No my soule, it is too short yet: for though the pitty of a Father may reach to be willing to dye for his Child, yet Gods pitty reacheth further; not onely to be willing to dye, but to dye indeed: and not onely for a Child, but for his Enemies; for when wee were enemies, even then did Christ very God dye for us: that Gods pitty holds the supremacie still, and cannot indeed be matcht; alas, it cannot be expresst by any thing that is in man.

But though there may be comparison in the tenderneſſe of their pitties, yet in the abilitie there can bee none; for a Father pitties oftentimes a child, when he cannot helpe him: but Gods pitty, is alwayes active and powerfull, and never without releeving: that though it be commonly said; *It is better to be envied, then pitied:* yet here it is not so: but it is a farre happier thing, to be pitied of God, then to be envied of men.

But

But whom is it that God pitties? onely them that feare him; and indeed Feare is a thing that deserves to be pitied: for it makes the joynts to tremble, and puts the spirits in amazement. But O my soule, it is not such a Feare that is here meant; but this Feare is all one, I may say with love, and differs but in the Object: for looking upon Gods Justice wee feare him: and looking upon his Mercy wee love him: although wee love him for his Justice too, and wee feare him for his Mercie too: for as there is Mercie with him, that hee may be feared; so there is Justice with him that he may be loved.

But why is it, that God pitties them that feare him? Indeed hee hath cause enough to pittie them: *For hee considers of what wee are framed; Hee remembers that we are but dust:* and alas, what is there in dust to helpe it selfe, if God in mercy take not pitty upon it? When God lookes downe upon us, and sees how foule we are growne, whom hee Created cleane: hath he not cause to fall a chiding, and to be angrie, yet when he considers of what we are framed, and that wee are but dust; this is some cause againe, to make him leave his chiding, and not to keepe his anger for ever; that we may truly say, Our miseries are our happinesse: for if it be our miserie, that we are framed of so meane a matter as Dust; It is our happinesse, that wee have the meanenesse of our matter, for God to take

Verse 14.

take into his consideration, and perhaps this was it; at least one circumstance that made so ill for the Angels that fell, that God could find no excuse of their sinne in their matter; the more hee considered of what they were framed, the more he found he had cause to bee angrie; and therefore no marvell, if his anger to them continue for ever.

But this is every ones case to bee framed of Dust; and why then should God pitty some, more then others, seeing they bee equally of Dust, All? Is it not, that hee is the lesse angrie indeed, for that they are but Dust; but yet he pitties them not, for being Dust; but for being Dust, and fearing him: for if they feare him not, he never pitties them, but lets them goe on in their Pride, at least in their securitie, and make what they can of their Dust: for they reckon upon great matters from their Dust, and thinke they can improve it to a great heigth: but alas, what can they make of it, but to come to be grasse, at most to get up to be a flowre, a poore fading thing, that whether you gather it, or let it grow; whether the Sunne shine upon it, or the Wind blow upon it, it quickly withers; and once withered, becomes a pittifull sight to be seene, a loathsome thing to be smelt; that where all the grace of it, consisted in the two Senses, of sight, and smelling, it is now offensive to both: and is no longer carried in the hand, or worne in the *Verse* 15.

bosome: Alas, it is scarce thought worthy to have a place upon the dunghill. And indeed what could more be lookt for of Dust? being so light a thing as it is; that if the wind but passe over it; if you but blow upon it, it is presently scattered and gone; and the place where it was, will know it no more. And such is Man: his flourishing is but as a Flowre, as quickly withered as a Flowre, and as soone cropt off from his stalke as a Flowre: and alas, what good is in a flourishing, that ends in a withering? What happinesse in pleasures that have no continuance? O my soule, if thou wert thy selfe a transitorie thing, and wert not to continue; thou mightst justly then looke after transitorie pleasures, and such as have no continuance: but seeing thou art a substance perpetuall, and immortall: O therefore looke after pleasures like thy selfe; pleasures that may last, and never come to the last, that may last and be durable: and not leave thee to the miserie of *Fuit Ilium, & ingens gloria teucrorum:* for *Fuisse felicem miserrimum est*: To have beene happy, and not to bee; to have flourished, and now to bee withered, is the greatest miserie in the world. And the greater, for that once pluckt off from his stalke; Once taken from the Earth, the Earth will never know him any more; Alas, it will scarce take notice, that ever such a one there was; and the notice it takes, but in *specie* neither; not in

Verse 16.

Indivi-

Individuo; ſome perhaps as of a man; None, as of this man: or rather, ſome, as of a Name; None, as of a man. Or is it rather, that Man turned once to Duſt, his place will know him no more; for how ſhould it know one from another, when they are all ſo like? How know *Dives* from *Lazarus*, when they have both the ſame face? ſeeing Death hath but one copie to draw all her pictures by. Or is it rather that Man once turn'd to Duſt, is blowne about with every wind, from place to place; and what knowes the place, when Duſt falls upon it; whether it be the Duſt of a Prince, or of a Peaſant; whether of a Man, or of a Beaſt? And muſt not Man then bee needes very miſerable; when Time, and place, the two beſt helpes of life doe both forſake him? for what helpe can hee have of Time, when his dayes are but as Graſſe? What help of Place, when his place denyes him, and will not know him? But O how vaine a thing is Man, to forget not onely the very matter of which he is made, but the very condition under which hee is made: and ſo to forget it, that God muſt bee faine to remember him of it: but much the vainer, that being remembred of it never ſo often, yet hee regards it never the more, but contenting himſelfe to be fading graſſe, at moſt a fading flowre; never ſeekes to improve his Duſt, to that true ſolidneſſe, which nothing but the feare of God

is able to procure, nothing but the pitty in God is able to effect.

But now at last, if neither the Distances of Place, nor the Affection of Nature can make you sufficiently conceive the greatnesse of Gods mercy: then take an expressing in plaine tearmes; and this will certainly make you conceive it: *For his mercy is from everlasting, to everlasting, upon them that feare him:* It is from everlasting, for it began to be before the Foundations of the world were laid: and it is to everlasting; for it will continue to be, when the Frame of the World shall bee dissolved: that now, O my soule, there can bee no feare of the greatnesse of Gods mercy: all the feare now, is of thine owne feare: for although Gods mercy bee so Everlasting; yet it is so, but to them that feare him; for if thou feare him not, and keepe not his Commandements, then his mercy to thee, is neither from Everlasting, nor to Everlasting: but if thou feare him, and keepe his Commandements, then his mercy to thee is both: and not onely to Thee, as though Gods mercy were onely a Personall benefit, and should end with thy selfe: but it shall be continued to thy childrens children; *Et natis natorum, & qui nascentur ab illis:* to thy whole Posteritie: O my soule, what an Inheritance is this, to purchase to our children? at least if it bee not an absolute Inheritance; yet it is so sure an Entayle, that nothing

Verse 17.

Verse 18.

nothing but the want of fearing God, can cut it off.

And indeed, why else hath God prepared his Throne in Heaven, but to the end the godly may bee assured, that though they bee now oppressed on earth; yet thither they shall come at last, to bee with him in Joy: to bee there in Joy, for having obeyed him: when the wicked shall bee left behind to bewayle their miseries for not obeying him. For though his Throne be prepared onely in Heaven; *Yet his kingdome ruleth over all:* Over All, both Man, and Beast; both the Godly, and the Wicked; both blessed Angells, and damned Spirits; and because his Kingdome ruleth over all, therefore All shall serve him, and shall serve him indeed with feare, yet there shall be a difference, for the godly shall serve him with feare and joy, where the wicked shall serve him with feare and trembling. *Verse* 19.

And now, seeing God hath prepared his Throne in heaven; Therefore, O yee his Angells, inhabitants of Heaven, that obey his Commandements by the freedome of your will; Doe you begin first, and prayse his Name: *for you excell in strength*, and are best able to doe it. And seeing his Kingdome ruleth over all: Therefore all ye his Hosts, his other Creatures that obey his Commandement too, though not by will, yet by instinct: Doe you second the Angels in praising his Name. And

then thou my ſoule, that partakeſt of both the Natures; Doe thou alſo, and with thee alſo, the Soules of all the godly joyne with them in his Prayſes: that ſo at leaſt there may bee a Conſort of Three, to Bleſſe and Praiſe him, who is a Trinitie in Unitie; Three Perſons and one God, to be Bleſſed, and praiſed, for ever, and ever; But to be bleſſed and praiſed, as by all the perſons of his Kingdome, ſo in all the places of his Dominion: which are Heaven, and Earth, and Hell: a Triplicitie too: for even Hell is a place within his Dominion: And for praiſing him in Heaven, the Angells will be ſure enough to looke to that: and for praiſing him in Hell, let the wicked and the damned ſpirits looke to that at their perill: but for praiſing him on Earth; Thou my ſoule, and the ſoules of all the godly will undertake to doe that, at leaſt will pray continually to him that ſitteth upon the Throne, to be enabled to doe it: and when all theſe ſhall faile, or leſt they ſhould faile, when Heaven and Earth ſhall paſſe away, when Time and Place ſhall bee no more: yet his Prayſe ſhall bee continued ſtill, by his owne Workes, which are his Glory, and his Power; his Infiniteneſſe, and his Eternitie; but above all, which is above all his Workes, the Workes of his infinite, and Everlaſting Mercie.

THE

THE HVNDRED AND SIXTEENTH PSALME OF DAVID.

1 I Love the Lord: becauſe hee hath heard my voyce, and my ſupplication.

2 Becauſe hee hath inclined his eare unto me; therefore will I call upon him, as long as I live.

3 The ſorrowes of death compaſſed me; and the paines of hell got hold upon mee: I found trouble and ſorrow.

4 Then called I upon the Name of the Lord; O Lord, I beſeech thee, deliver my ſoule.

5 The

5 The Lord is gracious, and righteous; yea, our God is mercifull.

6 The Lord preserveth the simple; I was brought low, and he helped me.

7 Returne unto thy rest, O my soule, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.

8 For thou hast delivered my soule from death, mine eyes from teares, and my feet from falling.

9 I will walke before the Lord in the land of the living.

10 I beleeved, therefore have I spoken; I was greatly afflicted.

11 I said in my haste; All men are lyars.

12 What shall I render to the Lord, for all his benefits towards me?

13 I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord.

14 I will pay my vowes unto the Lord; in the presence of all his people.

15 Pretious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his Saints.

16 O Lord, truly I am thy servant, I am thy servant and the sonne of thy hand-maid; thou hast loosed my bonds.

17 I

17 *I will offer to thee, the ſacrifice of thankſ-giving; and will call upon the Name of the Lord.*

18 *I will pay my vowes unto the Lord, in the preſence of all his people.*

19 *In the Courts of the Lords Houſe: in the midſt of thee, O Hieruſalem; prayſe yee the Lord.*

A a MEDI-

MEDITATIONS
VPON THE CXVI. PSALME OF *DAVID*.

BUt how can *David* say so peremptorily; *I will love the Lord*: as though it were in his owne power to love whom he list? Indeed nothing is so voluntary as love, that it seemes to be the extremitie of the will: for then wee are said to love a thing, when the will is inclined, and violently bent upon it: and yet I know not how, there seemes nothing more constrained then love; for we often-times love a thing, which we would faine wee could forbeare to love; but that we are drawne to love it, by a kind of violence in the object: and therefore *David* *Verse* 1.

may well say; *I will love the Lord:* seeing both the causes of love are here met, a propension in the Will, and an excellencie in the Object.

Man indeed is naturally a loving Creature, but doth not alwayes place his love aright: his love is then best placed, when it is placed upon the best Object; and what is that best Object, but God? If he place it upon Beauty, that fadeth: If upon Riches, they perish: If upon Honour, that vanisheth: If upon life, that wasteth: but all these are in God, not onely in Eminencie, but in Continuance: In him is Beautie that never fadeth: in him Riches that never perish; in him Honour that never vanisheth; in him life, that never wasteth; and therfore as the truest object of love, as the dearest object of my love; I will love the Lord.

But though all these Eminencies be in God, yet they would bee no cause for man to love him, if they had not a relation to man: for what cause of love? where there can be expected no effects of love: but seeing there is in them, not onely a Relation, but a Propension; not onely they are ready to bee imparted, but are imparted with readinesse; what man is hee that will forbeare to say, that can forbeare to say; *I love the Lord?* And if all men will forbeare to say it, yet I will say it: *For hee hath heard my voyce, and my supplication.* No doubt a just cause, or rather (indeed to a naturall man) the onely cause for loving of God

God. For of fearing him, of praiſing him, of worſhipping him, of magnifying him, there are other cauſes; but of loving him, no cauſe ſo proper as his loving of us: and the Benefits which he beſtowes upon us. For, love is ſo reciprocall a thing, that we ſhould hardly love God himſelfe, but for his Love to us; at leaſt for our opinion of his love to us; and wee ſhould hardly have an opinion of his love, if we had not a feeling of his Benefits: For what love can wee thinke is borne us by them, that are able to doe us good, and doe it not? but when we have a feeling of their benefits, and find they doe us good; then wee are eaſily perſwaded of their love; and being ſo perſwaded, who can chooſe but ſay, as *David* doth here; *I love the Lord for he hath heard my voyce, and my ſupplication.*

But doe we love God, but for his Benefits onely? and if it were not for his Benefits, ſhould we not love him? Indeed to love God as we ought, is not to love him for ought, but for himſelfe onely, without any conſideration had at all of his Benefits: but ſuch lovers wee are of our owne good, that wee ſhould ſcarce love our ſelves, but for the good, we are ready to doe our ſelves: and if we love God in the like degree, we thinke it perhaps to be love enough for him. But, O my ſoule, this is juſt the Divells love; I meane ſuch love, as the Divell thought to be in *Job*; *Doth Job love God*

for nought? He hoped he did not, though hee knew he ſhould; and therefore was never in quiet, till it might bee tryed; and if hee had found it ſo, he would quickly have made *Job* leave loving of God, and fall to loving of him. But the hedge which God had ſet about *Job*, was not a hedge of proſperitie as Sathan ſuppoſed, but a hedge of Grace, and therefore with all his fierie tryalls, hee could never get other words from *Job* but ſuch as theſe; *Shall we receive good at Gods hands, and ſhall we not receive evill? Yes, O Lord, though thou kill mee, yet will I love thee:* Thus *Job* did, and thus ſhould we doe: but God knowes, there is not ſuch a man againe as *Job* was upon the face of the earth. For alas, wee are commonly but of the Claſſis or forme, of which Saint *John* ſpeakes; *Wee love God, becauſe God loved us firſt:* and it were well if we would doe but ſo: how much ſoever Sathan ſlights it, and ſeekes to diſgrace it. Or is it perhaps, that *David* ſpeakes in the curioſitie of this diſtinction, that we doe not *Amare Deum*, but for his Benefits: but wee may *Diligere Deum*, without any conſideration of his Benefits had at all; and in this ſenſe, a naturall man may *Amare Deum:* but none but the ſpirituall man, *Diligere Deum.* But, O my ſoule, doe thou endevour to be of *Jobs* forme; to love God without diſtinction; and whether he heare thy voyce, or heare it not; whether he grant thy ſupplication, or grant it not, yet

to

to love him, and to love with *Amando*, and with *Diligendo*; and with any another Devotion of love, that can be expressed, or conceived. For it is indeed no true love of God, if wee love him for any thing, but for himselfe; if we love our selves, but onely for him: as it seemes both *Moses*, and Saint *Paul* did, who for the love of God, left all care of themselves, and were contented to have beene (if they might have beene) even Anathema's.

But is this such a Benefit to us, that GOD heares us? Is his hearing our voyce, such an argument of his love? Alas! hee may heare us, and we never the bettet: hee may heare our voyce, and yet his love to us perhaps but little, for who will not give a man the hearing, though he love him not at all? With men perhaps it may be so, but not with God; for his hearing is not onely voluntarie, but reserved; *Non omnibus dormit*: his Eares are not open to every ones cry; indeed to heare us, is in God so great a favour, that he may well be counted his Favourite, whom he vouchsafes to heare: and the rather, for that his hearing is alwayes operative, and with a purpose of helping; that if he heare my voyce, I may be sure, he meanes to grant my supplication; or rather perhaps in *Davids* manner of expressing, in Gods manner of proceeding, to heare my voyce, is no lesse in effect, then to grant my supplication.

And now because hee hath inclined his eare to heare *Verse 2.*

heare me; I will therefore call upon him, as long as I live: that if it be expected I ſhould call upon any other; it muſt bee when I am dead; for as long as I live, I have vowed to call upon God. But will this be well done? May I not in ſo doing, doe more then I ſhall have thankes for perhaps for my labour? Is this the requitall that God ſhall have for his kindneſſe in hearing me, that now he ſhall have a cuſtomer of me, and never be in quiet, for my continuall running to him, and calling upon him? Doth God get any thing by my calling upon him, that I ſhould make it a Vow, as though in calling upon him, I did him a pleaſure? O my Soule, that God might indeed have a cuſtomer of me in praying: although I confeſſe I ſhould not be ſo bold to call upon him ſo continually, if his owne commanding me, did not make it a Dutie: for hath not God bid me to call upon him when I am in trouble? and is there any time that I am not in trouble, as long as I live in this vale of miſerie? and then can there be any time as long as I live, that I muſt not call upon him? For ſhall God bid me, and ſhall I not doe it? ſhall God incline his Eare, and ſtand liſtening to heare, and ſhall I hold my peace for the nonce, that he may have nothing to heare? Or ſhall I wave calling upon God, who I know both can, and will heare mee; and call upon ſome other, who I know not whether they can or no? Is Prayer worth any thing if it

it bee not in Faith? and can there bee Faith, where there is uncertaintie? O my Soule, this is a great ſecret, which we ſhould perhaps have never knowne, if God himſelfe had not revealed it to us; that to call upon him, is not a trouble to him, but a pleaſure; not in us a preſumption, but a dutie: though it be our ſuite, yet it is his ſervice: it is indeed both our ſuite and ſervice: and though his glory be not the more by it, yet his glory is the more manifeſted by it; and as he is a jealous God, ſo of nothing ſo much as of his glory, his glory hee will not communicate with any other, any thing elſe perhaps, but not his glory: and this is all the glory hee can have from us, that wee acknowledge our owne weakneſſe, and his Power; that we call upon him, not onely as one that is able to helpe us, but as the onely One that is able to helpe us, for elſe we ſatisfie not his jealouſie: and if it be a true rule in Philoſophie; *Fruſtra fit per plura, quod fieri poteſt per pauciora*: It is no leſſe true in Divinitie: It is in vaine to call upon any other for reliefe but God alone; if God alone be able, and willing to relieve us. Either therefore wee muſt ſay, that God is not able, or not willing to helpe us; or elſe confeſſe it at leaſt a great vanitie to call for helpe to any other.

But if Gods benefits be the Motive to love him: why are not his afflictions as well a Motive, not to love him? *For is there any evill in*

the Citie, and God hath not done it? No my soule, the reason is not like: his benefits are all gratuitous, and come *gratis* from him: his Afflictions are as it were violent, and come forcibly from him: his Afflictions are punishments, or chastisements duly deserved: but his Benefits are not Wages, or Rewards that are justly merited: and therefore we cannot so justly say, that crosses and afflictions are cast upon us by God, as that they are drawne upon us by our owne sinne: for sorrowes and paines, are as the Ecchoes I may say of sinne: and according as this calls, so they answer: if sinnes be but light, there is like to be heard, but a light reflexe of sorrowes; but if they be crying sinnes, heynous, and loude: what marvell if the Ecchoes be answerable, and that the sorrowes of Death compasse us about, and the paines of Hell take hold upon us?

But if it be doubted, by what meanes afflictions and crosses doe happen to us, yet it cannot be doubted by what meanes they must be removed from us: seeing there is none able to rowle away the Grave-stone of our sinnes, but onely God: and therefore no meanes to remove afflictions, but onely his Mercy: and no meanes of this meanes, but to call upon him. Doe Physitians use to come to a Patient, unlesse they be called? and why then should wee looke that God the great Physitian of our soules, should come to helpe us, if we call not upon

upon him? Upon him, O my soule, and upon no other: for of his Power and Will to helpe me, I cannot doubt, of others I may: For, *the sorrowes of death compassed me, and the paines of hell tooke hold upon me*; and can I doubt of his power, that hath delivered me from these? Or can I thinke of any other, that could deliver me from these, but onely hee? Could any deliver me from the sorrowes of Death, but hee onely who triumphed over Death? Could any free me from the paines of Hell, but hee onely who put Hell it selfe to paine, and cast Death and Hell into the Lake of fire? and shall I call upon any other to deliver me, but upon him onely, who I am well assured is able to deliver me? No my soule, but to leave no time, for calling upon any other; *I will call upon God, as long as I live*: Not for a day, or a moneth, but all the dayes of my life; even as long as I live. And how long will that bee? Alas! how long can it be, seeing *the sorrowes of Death have already compassed me about; and the paines of hell have taken hold upon mee?* For what are the sorrowes of Death, but sorrowes like those of *Rachel*, that would not be comforted, because they were not? What are the paines of Hell, but paines caused by guiltinesse of sin that deserves Hell? Paines not more in sense of torment, then despaire of remedie? What is it for the sorrowes of death to compasse me about, but as it were to besiege me? and was *Verse* 3.

it ever knowne, where they once beſieged, that ever they did raiſe their ſiege? Was it ever knowne, where the paines of Hell did once take hold, that ever they did let goe their hold? and alas, in this extremitie of diſtreſſe, in this gulph of deſpaire, what hope could *David* poſſibly have, that ever hee ſhould be delivered? O my ſoule, the hope of *Abraham: In ſpe contra ſpem credidit:* Hee beleeved againſt all credibilitie; Hee hoped againſt all poſſibilitie; againſt all poſſibilitie indeed in the courſe of nature; againſt all credibilitie in the eye of Reaſon; and therefore he makes his moane to one above the reach, both of Nature and Reaſon; *O Lord, I beſeech thee, deliver my ſoule:* a ſhort Prayer for ſo great a ſuite; and yet as ſhort as it was, it prevailed, that if wee wondred before at the power of God, wee may wonder now at the power of Prayer, that can prevaile with God, for obtaining of that, which in Nature is impoſſible, and to Reaſon ſeemes incredible.

Verſe 4.

There are many ſhort Prayers recorded in the Scriptures, of which we may note eſpecially three: This of *David* here; *O Lord deliver my ſoule:* and that of the Publican in the Goſpell; *Lord be mercifull to me a ſinner:* and that of the Thiefe upon the Croſſe; *Lord remember me, when thou commeſt into thy kingdome:* All three ſhort, yet all three Prevalent; that wee may know, it is not the multiplicitie of words, or

or the length of Prayers that prevailes with God; but the fervencie of ſpirit, and the devotion of the heart. Yet leſt it ſhould be taken as a reſtraint of longer prayers; and ſpecially, leſt it ſhould be a ſcandall to the Prayer which Chriſt taught us, and is much longer: we may obſerve withall, that each of theſe prayers, is but of one Petition in Chriſts Prayer: For to ſay, O Lord, deliver my ſoule, is no more, nor fully ſo much, as to ſay, *Deliver us from evill:* and to ſay, Lord be mercifull to mee a ſinner, is no more, nor fully ſo much, as to ſay; *Forgive us our treſpaſſes:* and to ſay, *Lord remember mee, when thou commeſt into thy Kingdome*, is no more, nor ſo much, as to ſay, *Thy kindome come.*

But ſeeing *David* with his ſhort Prayer, prevailed with God, to deliver his ſoule: why ſhould I deſpaire of the like ſucceſſe of my prayers, to be delivered from my troubles? O my ſoule, I ſhould not deſpaire of the like ſucceſſe, as *David* had, if I could but pray with the like ſpirit as *David* did: O therefore, thou great God, that didſt inſpire *Davids* heart with a ſpirit of zeale: which made his prayers not onely acceptable, but effectuall: vouchſafe alſo to kindle in my heart, a fire of Devotion, that my prayers may aſcend unto thee, like the ſacrifice of *Abell:* ſo acceptable, that they may be accepted; ſo accepted, that they may be effectuall: and may make mee able to ſing this Allelujah of *David: I will love the Lord; for he*

hath heard my voyce, and my supplication.

And now, O my soule, me thinkes I see the Lord, as it were inclining his eare unto me; and I seeme to feele an accesse of force in my confidence of his goodnesse, for indeed, *the Lord is gracious, and righteous; yea, our God is mercifull:* Hee is gracious in hearing; Hee is righteous in judging; hee is mercifull in Pardoning; and how then can I doubt of his will to helpe me? Hee is righteous to reward according to deserts; He is gracious to Reward above deserts; Yea, he is mercifull to reward without deserts; and how then can I doubt of his Will to helpe mee? Hee is gracious, and this shews his bountie; he is righteous, and this shews his Justice; Yea, hee is mercifull, and this shews his love, and how then can I doubt of his Will to helpe mee? If hee were not gracious, I could not hope he would heare me: If he were not righteous, I could not depend upon his Promise; If hee were not Mercifull, I could not expect his Pardon; but now that he is gracious, and righteous, yea, and mercifull too, how can I doubt of his Will to helpe me?

Verse 5.

But are there no others that are gracious, and righteous, and mercifull, as well as Hee? Are not the Saints, and Angels in Heaven? They are so no doubt, but not as well as hee; God forbid, wee should once have such a thought; They are Gracious, and Righteous, and Mercifull by participation onely; and onely

onely by having, as it were, some beames imparted to them: but to bee gracious, as the Fountaine of Grace; to be Righteous, as the Sunne of Righteousnesse: to be Mercifull, as the Authour of Mercie; there is none, there is none at all, neither Saint nor Angell that is so, but onely God; and therefore of Gods Power and Will to helpe me; of his, and of his onely, I can onely be assured. And if I erre in simplicitie, yet *the Lord preserveth the simple*: he takes not advantage of errours, where there is a good intention; yet not a good intention onely, where the truth is manifest, and revealed: for then should *Uzzah* have beene preserved: but in matters obscure, and not plainly revealed, there to serve God in simplicitie of heart; this falls within the compasse of Gods mercy: and such he takes into his Protection. He gives them perhaps some resentment of their errours by worldly crosses, but yet hee denyes them not his assistance; and this I can speake of my owne experience; For, *I was brought low, and yet hee helped me*: I was brought low, and in trouble, by the just provocation of my sinnes; but because I sinned not in presumption, but in simplicitie, at least by infirmitie; the Lord hath had mercy on me, and preserved me. Or, *I was brought low, and hee helped mee*: for then is the time of helpe, when we are brought low: and therefore God who doth all things in due time, when I was brought low, then he helped me. *Verse 6.*

Where-

Wherefore, O my ſoule, let it never trouble thee, how low ſoever thou bee brought; for when thy ſtate is at the loweſt, then is Gods aſſiſtance at the neereſt; that we may truly ſay, Gods wayes, are not as the wayes of the world: for in the world, when a man is once brought low, he is commonly trampled upon, and nothing is heard then, but downe with him, downe to the ground: but with God, it is otherwiſe; for his propertie is to raiſe up them that fall, and when they are brought low, then to helpe them. That it is no ſuch hard caſe for a man to bee brought low; may I not rather ſay, his caſe is happy? for is it not better to be brought low, and have God to helpe him, then to be ſet aloft, and left to helpe himſelfe? At leaſt, O my Body; this may bee a comfort to thee: for thou art ſure to bee brought low, as low as the Grave, which is low indeed: yet there thou maieſt reſt in hope; for even there, the Lord will not leave to helpe thee.

Or is it that he was brought low, was humbled in ſpirit, to ſeeme vile in his owne eyes; and then God helped him? *For God reſiſteth the proud; but giveth grace to the humble.*

Verſe 7. Now therefore, *O my ſoule, returne to thy reſt; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee:* Now my ſoule, let it be no longer ſaid; Why art thou ſo heavie, and why art thou diſquieted within me? For the Lord hath exceeded the bounds of mercifulneſſe, with his bountifulneſſe:

neſſe: Not onely in mercy hee hath forgiven my ſinnes, but as if my ſinnes had been Merits, he hath made me alſo to taſte of his bountie. Hee hath dealt indeed moſt bountifully with thee, for where thou didſt make ſuite but for one thing, hee hath granted thee three: Thou didſt aske but to have my ſoule delivered; and he hath delivered mine eyes, and my feet beſides: and with a deliverance in each of them, the greateſt that could be: for what greater deliverance to my ſoule, then to bee delivered from Death? What greater deliverance to mine eyes, then to be delivered from teares? What, to my feet then to bee delivered from falling? that if now, O my ſoule, thou returne not to thy reſt, thou wilt ſhew thy ſelfe to bee moſt inſatiable: ſeeing thou haſt not onely more then thou didſt aske, but as much indeed as was poſſible to be ask'd.

But can my ſoule dye? and if not, what bountie is it then to deliver my ſoule from that to which it is not ſubject? The ſoule indeed, though immortall, hath yet her wayes of dying: It is one kind of death to the ſoule, to bee parted from the body, but the trueſt kind is to bee parted from God: and from both theſe kindes of death, hee hath delivered my ſoule: From the firſt, by delivering me from a dangerous ſickneſſe, that threatned a diſſolution of my ſoule and body: from the other, by delivering me from the guilt of ſinne, that threat-

ned a ſeparation from the favour of God, and are not theſe, bounties to give my ſoule juſt cauſe of returning to her reſt? It is true, it is the imperfection of life, that it is ſubject to ſickneſſe, and ſickneſſe drawes mortalitie after it: but this imperfection is not here; for hee hath delivered my ſoule from death; and what is this, but to have perfect health? yet it is the imperfection of health, that it is ſubject to croſſes, and croſſes are a cauſe of teares: but neither hath this imperfection any place here, for he hath delivered mine eyes from teares; and what is this, but to have perfect Joy? yet it is the imperfection of joy, that it uſeth not to continue, as it is ſaid of the proſperitie of the wicked: They are ſet in ſlipperie places, and are apt to fall: but neither is this imperfection found here; for hee hath delivered my feet from falling: and what is this but to be aſſured of continuance? If then thou haſt ſuch health, ſuch joy, ſuch ſtabilitie; Health, not ſubject to ſickneſſe; Joy, not capable of ſorrow; Stabilitie, not obnoxious to falling; How canſt thou, O my ſoule, how canſt thou chooſe but pacifie thy unquietneſſe, and returne to thy reſt? But alas, the reſt thou canſt returne to now, is but a type of that true Reſt, when thou ſhalt reſt from thy labours; and when thy workes that now goe with thee, ſhall then follow thee. Thou haſt now but one day of Reſt for ſixe dayes of labour; but then thou ſhalt

have an eternall Sabbath, without any dayes of labour to disquiet it.

But though this rest cannot now bee had, whilst thou dwellest in a restlesse body, and thy body in a restlesse world: yet there is a Rest that is worth the having; and may onely, my soule, be called Thy Rest: the rest which consists in the peace of conscience: and to this rest thou maist well returne, seeing not onely thou art at peace with God, as being justified by his Grace; but thou art in his favour also, as having dealt so bountifully with thee. And when thou returnest to this rest; to the end thou maist have some exercise to thy rest, that thy resting make thee not restiffe, *I will walke before the Lord, in the land of the living.* For now that my feet are delivered from falling, how can I better imploy them, then in walking? were they delivered from falling, to the end they should stand still and bee idle? No my soule, but to encourage me to walke: and where is so good walking, as in the land of the living? Alas! what walking is it in the Winter, when all things seeme dead, when the very grasse lyes buried under ground, and scarce any thing that hath life in it, to be seene? but then is the pleasant walking, when Nature spreads her greene Carpet to walke upon, and then it is a Land of the living; when the Trees shew they live, by bringing forth, if not fruits, at least leaves: when the Valleys shew they live,

Verse 9.

by bringing forth, if not ſweet flowers to delight the ſmell, at leaſt freſh graſſe to pleaſe the eyes. But is this the walking in the Land of the living, that *David* meanes? O my ſoule, to walke in the Land of the living, is to walke in the pathes of Righteouſneſſe: for there is no ſuch death to the ſoule as ſinne; no ſuch cauſe of teares to the eyes, as guiltineſſe of Conſcience; No ſuch falling of the feet, as to fall from God: and therefore to ſay the truth, the Soule can never returne to its reſt, if we walke not withall in the paths of righteouſneſſe: and we cannot well ſay, whether this Reſt bee a cauſe of the walke; or the walking, be a cauſe of the reſting: but this wee may ſay, they are certainly companions one to the other, which is in effect but this; that Juſtification can never be without Sanctification; Peace of conſcience, and godlineſſe of life, can never be one without the other. Or is it perhaps, that *David* meanes that Land of the living; where *Enoch* and *Elias* are living, with the living God? but if he meane ſo, how can he ſpeake ſo confidently, and ſay; *I will walke in the Land of the living*; as though hee could come to walke there by his owne ſtrength, or at his owne pleaſure? Hee therefore gives his reaſon: *I beleeved, and therefore I ſpake*: for the voyce of Faith is ſtrong, and ſpeakes with confidence; and becauſe in Faith he beleeved, that hee ſhall come, to walke in the Land of the living;

Verſe 10.

there-

therefore with confidence he ſpeakes it; *I will walke in the land of the living*: and perhaps to ſignifie, that hee ſhall not walke there againſt his will: but that he endeavours, and uſeth the beſt meanes he can, that hee may walke there. For indeed if we endeavour not to walke here, with *Enoch* and *Elias* in the paths of righteouſneſſe, we ſhall never come to walke with God in the Land of the living.

But though I had ſpoken thus, and thus confidently; yet I found my ſelfe in trouble, and affliction ſtill, which made me ſay in my haſt; *All men are lyars.* In my haſt indeed, for I thought not of one man who was farre from being a lyar; and in whoſe mouth was found no guile. *Verſe* 11.

It ſeemes, that to give the lye, was not ſo heynous an offence in *Davids* time, as it is in theſe dayes, for elſe how durſt he have ſpoken ſuch words, that *all men are lyars*: which is no leſſe, then to give the lye to the whole world? And yet, no man I thinke, will challenge him for ſaying ſo; no more then challenge S. *John* for ſaying, that All men are ſinners. And indeed, how ſhould any man avoid being a lyar, ſeeing the very being Man, is it ſelfe a lye? Not onely a Vanity, and put in the ballance is leſſe then vanity: but a very lye, promiſing great matters, and is able to doe juſt nothing, as Chriſt ſaith; *Without me, yee can doe nothing*: and ſo Chriſt ſeemes to come in, as it were, to

be *Davids* second, and to make his word good, that *all men be lyars*. And now let the world doe its worst, and take the lye how it will, for *David* having Christ of his side, will alwayes be able to make his part good against all the world, for Christ hath overcome the world.

But though all men may be said to be lyars, yet not all men in all things: for then *David* himselfe should be a lyar in this: but all men perhaps in something or other, at some time or other, in some kind or other; Absolute truth not found in any man, but in that man onely, who was not man onely; for if hee had beene but so, it had not perhaps beene found in him neither, seeing absolute Truth and Deitie, are as Relatives never found to be asunder.

But in what thing is it, that all men should be lyars? Indeed in this for one, to thinke that God regards not, nor loves not them, whom he suffers to be afflicted: for we may rather thinke hee loves them most, whom hee suffers to be most afflicted: and we may truly say, he would never have suffered his servant *Job*, to be afflicted so exceeding cruelly, if he had not loved him exceeding tenderly; For there is nothing lost by suffering afflictions, No my soule, they doe but serve to make up the greater weight of glory, when it shall be revealed.

But let his afflictions be what they can be, yet I will alwayes acknowledge, they can never be in any degree so great as his benefits:

and

and oh, that *I could thinke of something, that I might render to him for all his benefits*: for shall I receive so great, so infinite benefits from him; and shall I render nothing to him, by way of gratefulnesse? But alas, what have I to render? all my rendring to him, will bee but taking more from him: for all I can doe, is but *to take the cup of salvation, and call upon his Name*; and what rendring is there in this taking? If I could take the cup of Tribulation, and drinke it off, for his sake; this perhaps might be a rendring of some value: but this, God knowes is no worke for me to doe: It was his worke who said; *Can yee drinke of the cup, of which I shall drinke?* Indeed he dranke of the Cup of Tribulation, to the end that wee might take the Cup of Salvation; but then in taking it, wee must call upon his Name; upon his Name, and upon no others; for else wee shall make it a cuppe of Condemnation, seeing there is no Name under Heaven, in which we may bee saved, but onely the Name of Jesus.

Verse 12.

Verse 13.

Yet it may be some rendring to the Lord, if I pay my Vowes; and doe, as it were, my Penance openly; *I will therefore pay my vowes to the Lord, in the presence of all his people.* But might hee not pay his Vowes as well in his Closet, betweene God and himselfe, as to doe it publickly? No my soule, it serves not his turne; indeed not Gods turne, but he must pay them in the presence of all his people, yet not

Verse 14.

to

to the end hee ſhould be applauded for a juſt Payer; for though he pay them, yet he can never pay them to the full; but to the end that men ſeeing his good workes, may glorifie God by his example; and the rather perhaps, for that *David* was a King; and the Kings example prevailes much with the people, to make them pay their vowes to God: but moſt of all, that by this meanes, *Davids* Pietie may not be barren; but may make a Breed of Pietie in the people alſo: which may be one myſticall reaſon, why it was counted a Curſe in Iſrael, to be barren; for he that payes not his Vowes to God, in the preſence of his people, may well be ſaid to be barren in Iſrael; ſeeing hee begets no children to God, by his Example. And perhaps alſo, the Vowes which *David* meanes here, was the doing of ſome meane things, unfit in ſhew for the dignitie of a King; as when it was thought a baſe thing in him to Daunce before the Arke; he then vowed he would be baſer yet: and in this caſe, to pay his Vowes before the people, becomes a matter of neceſſitie: for as there is no honour to a man, whilſt he is by himſelfe alone; ſo there is no ſhame to a man, but before people: and therefore to ſhew that he is not aſhamed to doe any thing how meane ſoever, ſo it may tend to the glorifying of God; *Hee will pay his vowes in the preſence of all his people:* And hee will doe it, though it coſt him his life, for if he dye for it, he

Verse 15.

he knowes, that *Pretious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his Saints.*

But that which is pretious, is commonly desired: and doth God then desire the death of his Saints? He desires, no doubt, that death of his Saints, which is to dye to sinne: but for any other death of his Saints, it is therefore said to be pretious in his sight, because hee layes it up with the greatest carefulnesse. And for this it is, there are such severall Mansions in Gods House, that to them whose death is pretious in his sight, hee may assigne the most glorious Mansions. This indeed is the reward of Martyrdome, and the encouragement of Martyrs, though their sufferings bee most insufferable, their tortures most intolerable; yet this makes amends for all; that *Pretious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his Saints:* for if it be so great a happinesse, to be acceptable in his sight; how great a happinesse must it be, to bee pretious in his sight? When God at the Creation, looked upon all his workes; it is said, he saw them to be all exceeding good: but it is not said, that any of them were Pretious in his sight, and how then comes Death, to bee pretious in his sight, that was none of his workes, but is a destroyer of his workes? Is it possible that a thing which destroyes his creatures, should have a Title of more value in his sight, then his creatures themselves? O my soule, this is one of the Myracles of his Saints, and perhaps one of

those which Christ meant, when he said to his Apostles, that greater Myracles then he did, they should doe themselves: for what greater Myracle than this, that Death which of it selfe is a thing most vile in the sight of God, yet once embraced by his Saints, as it were by their touch onely, becomes pretious in his sight? and to alter a thing from being vile to be precious, is it not a greater Myracle, then to turne Water into Wine? Indeed so it is, Death doth not damnifie his Saints, but his Saints doe dignifie Death: Death takes nothing away from his Saints happinesse, but his Saints adde lustre to Deaths vilenesse: and it is happy for Death, that ever it met with any of Gods Saints, for there was no way for it else in the world, to be ever had in any account. But why say I, in the world? for it is of no account in the world for all this: It is but onely in the sight of God, but indeed this onely, is All in All, for to be pretious in Gods sight, is more to be prized then the world it selfe. For when the World shall passe away, and all the glory of it be laid in the dust, then shall Trophyes be erected for the death of his Saints: and when all Monuments of the world shall bee utterly defaced, and all Records quite rased out, yet the death of his Saints shall stand Registred still, in faire Red letters in the Kalendar of Heaven: for if there be glory laid up for them that dye in the Lord, much more shall they bee glorifi-

glorified, that dye for the Lord.

I have wondered often-times, why God will suffer his Saints to dye; I meane not the death naturall; for I know, *Statutum est omnibus semel mori*: but the Death that is by violence, and with torture: for who could endure to see them he loves, so cruelly handled? but now I see the reason of it; For, *Pretious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his Saints*: and what marvell then, if he suffer his Saints to dye: when by dying they are wrought, and made fit Jewels to be set in his Cavinet: for as God hath a Bottle which he fills up with the teares of his Saints; so I may say, he hath a Cabinet which he decks up with the deaths of his Saints: and O my soule, if thou couldst but comprehend, what a glory it is to serve for a Jewell in the decking up of Gods Cabinet, thou wouldst never wonder why he suffers his Saints to bee put to death, though with never so great torments: for it is but the same which Saint *Paul* saith: *The afflictions of this life, are not worthy of the glory that shall bee revealed.*

But if you will have a Glasse to view the Extent of this pretiousnesse, and plainly to see, how pretious in the sight of God, the death of his Saints is; then look upon the revenge that is taken for it: for there is nothing that God takes so much to heart; and of which hee takes so sharpe revenge, as the death of his Saints: to touch them, is to touch the Apple of his eye:

and if the punishment of *Cain* bee not thought sufficient, to make it appeare, at least the complaint of Christ against *Hierusalem*, will be sufficient: *O Hierusalem, Hierusalem, Thou that killest the Prophets*: and it is thought by some, that the destruction of *Hierusalem* was the rather hastened, to revenge the death of *James*, who was called the Just: but howsoever, this wee know, it was therefore executed, to revenge the death of *Jesus*, who was truly the Just: and may we not well take notice, that the death was exceeding pretious, when the revenge that was taken, was so exceeding furious? But why speake I of Death, when I may yet doe God good service in life: and if the death of his Saints be pretious in his sight, certainly the life of his servants is not unregarded; For whether we dye, wee dye to the Lord; or whether wee live, wee live to the Lord: and though in this life, we cannot expect the reward of Saints, yet in this life wee may claime the respect of servants: and in this I claime an interest my selfe;

Verse 16. *for truly, O Lord, I am thy servant*: and oh that I could serve thee so truly, that I might heare thee say, *Euge bone serve*: For we are all very ready to professe our selves thy servants; but very unready to doe the service of our profession: and specially in these times, when Servant is growne to be a word of complyment, rather than of truth; that to say, I am thy servant, is all one as to say, I am an Hypocrite.

But

But, O Lord, let it not be found so in me; not be thought so of me, for I am thy servant by a double right: (and oh that I could doe thee double service) as thou art the Lord of life, and as I am the sonne of thy Handmaid: Not of *Hagar*, but of *Sarah*: not of the Bond-woman, but of the Free; and therefore I serve thee not in Feare, but in Love: or therefore in feare, because in love: and then is service best done, when it is done in love: and in love indeed I am bound to serve thee; For, *thou hast looſed my bonds*: the Bonds of death which compassed me about, by delivering me from a dangerous sicknesse, and restoring me to health: or in a higher kind; Thou hast looſed my Bonds, by freeing me from being a Captive, to bee a Servant; and which is more, from being a servant to be a sonne: and more then this yet, from being a sonne of thy Hand-maid, to be a sonne of thy selfe: and therefore indeed a sonne of thy selfe, because a sonne of thy Handmaid: for what is thy Handmaid, but thy Church? and he that is not borne of this Handmaid, though he may have the generall benefit of a servant, sustenance and protection, yet hee can never have the speciall benefits of a sonne, freedome, and inheritance.

Or *thou hast looſed my bonds*; Thou hast freed me from the heavy yoak of the Ceremonies of the Law; and hast Enfranchiſed mee with the glorious liberty of the Gospell: that where

before, thou didſt require the ſacrifice of Servants, which was the bloud of Beaſts; now thou acceptſt the ſacrifice of ſonnes, which is
Verſe 17. Prayer, and Thankſ-giving: *I will therefore offer to thee the ſacrifice of thankſ-giving, and call upon thy Name:* For Prayer and Thankſ-giving make both but one Sacrifice: and ſeeing all ſacrifice is due onely to thee; therefore to thee onely I will offer both my Thankſ-giving, and my Prayer. I could not make Thankeſ-giving a Sacrifice, if Prayer did not begin it: I could not make Prayer a Sacrifice, if Thankſ-giving did not finiſh it. If there ſhould bee Thankeſ-giving, and no Prayer, the Sacrifice would want a foot: if Prayer, and no Thankſ-giving, it would want a Head: for as the *Baſis* is Prayer; ſo the *Coronis* is thankſ-giving. Although perhaps Thankſ-giving bee but the Act, and Thankfulneſſe the Habit: and it is the Habit that makes the Sacrifice, becauſe it muſt bee, *Fuge ſacrificium*, A continuall Sacrifice: which the Act cannot be. And if there had beene a word to expreſſe the Habit of praying, as Thankfulneſſe doth of Thankſ-giving: perhaps Saint *Paul* would have uſed it, where he ſaith, *Pray continually*, for who can doubt but hee meanes the Habit of praying, and not the Act? and where he ſaith; *In all things give thankes*; Ευχαριστεῖτε: It intends perhaps but this; *In all things be thankfull.*

And what then ſhall the Thankfulneſſe, or the

the Thanks-giving be, that I will offer to God for a sacrifice? O my soule, it shall bee an acknowledging of his benefits, and of his onely benefits; it shall be a proclaiming him to bee my Patron, and my onely Patron; It shall bee an extolling him for his Mercy in forgiving my sinnes; for his graciousnesse in healing all my infirmities; for his compassion, in Redeeming my soule from destruction, and for his bountie in crowning me with loving kindnesse and tender mercies: it shall bee indeed a Vowing to him the whole service of all the faculties of my soule and body. And not to be done in a corner, as though I were not willing it should be knowne; nor before some few people onely, as though I were loath too many should see it; but *I will pay my vowes to him in the presence of all his people:* that young and old, rich, and poore, high, and low, may all bee witnesses of my thankfulnesse; This, for the persons before whom it shall be done: and then for the place in which it shall be done; it shall be done *in the courts of the Lords house:* if any place be more conspicuous, more publick then other it shall be done there: it shall be done *in the midst of thee, O Hierusalem:* that the Fame of it may be spread, that the sound of it may equally goe forth into all parts of the world; that as all thy people shall be beholders of my thankfulnesse, so all the world shall bee admirers of thy goodnesse; and as there is in Heaven

Verse 18.

Verse 19.

ven an Allelujah of thy Saints; ſo there ſhall be in Earth an Allelujah of thy Servants; of which Number; of both which numbers, my hope is to be one; and that I may be ſure to be one, O my ſoule, praiſe thou the Lord: and becauſe my owne praiſing, will be but a very ſmall ſervice; therefore mend it my ſoule, by calling upon others, and ſaying;

Praiſe yee the Lord.

FINIS.

UMI